THE

# CALL

OF THE

# *SON of GOD:*

OR, A

# Door of Salvation

## Open'd to SINNERS.

Plainly Shewing

Every Poor Sinner the Miſerableneſs of his Eſtate, and how great an Enemy he is to himſelf: With ſeveral Powerful Arguments, earneſtly Exhorting the Sinner to Repent, after the moſt Moving and Pathetical Manner. With many ſweet Invitations to come to CHRIST, that they may have Eternal Life, and be hid from the Wrath of GOD, which is worſe then Death.

By *N. D.*

*LONDON:*

Printed for *Eben. Tracy*, at the *Three Bibles* on *London-Bridge*. 1707.

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# CALL

OF THE

# SON of GOD:

OR, A

# Door of Salvation Open'd to SINNERS.

Plainly [illegible]

Every Poor Sinner [illegible] Miserableness of his Estate, and [illegible] an Enemy he is to himself: With several Powerful Arguments, earnestly Exhorting the Sinner to Repent, after the most Moving and Pathetical Manner. With many sweet Invitations to come to CHRIST, that they may have Eternal Life, and be hid from the Wrath of GOD, which is worse then Death.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

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# TO THE QUEEN.

MADAM,

YOUR MAJESTY's Name is not more Illustrious for all the Glorious Successes of Your Arms abroad, than for Your Noble Design and constant Endeavours to promote Piety and Vertue at home: A Design so necessary for the Welfare of Your Subjects, and the Security of Your Throne, as renders all the proper means

conducing to it very acceptable to Your MAJESTY. This encourages me with all humility to beg pardon for prefixing Your Auguſt Name to this little Tract; which is written with ſuch a lively ſenſe of God and Religion, in *a New and Winning Way*, as will by the Bleſſing of God prove an effectual means ſubſervient to Your grand Deſign of diſcountenancing Vice and encouraging Vertue. Your MAJESTY will quickly perceive, if Your great Affairs will permit You to caſt an Eye upon it, That it repreſents JESUS CHRIST *in Perſon* Courting the Sinner to Repentance, after the moſt Affectionate and Pathetical manner, by all the Motives of his infinite Love and Goodneſs

neſs, and Relating what he did and ſuffer'd for the Salvation of Mankind, in words ſo full of Tenderneſs and Compaſſion for the Souls of Sinners, as are excellently ſuited to melt the hardeſt Heart into Tears of Contrition, and to win them over to the Love of Chriſt, by the Powerful Charms of his Divine Kindneſs and Mercy.

That God would be pleas'd to make Your MAJESTY the happy Inſtrument of a General Reformation of Manners, and bleſs with Succeſs all the means your Wiſdom ordains to that end: That Your exemplary Piety, and all the other Royal Vertues, wherewith You adorn the Throne, may be bleſs'd with long Life and

and Prosperity here in this World, and at last Crown'd with that great Reward in Heaven, which is reserv'd for those Religious Princes, who have most advanc'd the Glory of God, and the Good of Mankind,

Is the hearty Prayer of,

20 MA 59

MADAM,

*Your MAJESTY's*

*most Humble, and most*

*Obedient Servant,*

N. D.

# *Stimulus Compunctionis;*
# OR,
# MOTIVES TO REPENTANCE.

## CHAP. I.

### *Of the Compassionate Sense of Jesus Christ, bemoaning a Sinner for turning away from him.*

I The Only-begotten Son of the Eternal Father, the Power and Wisdom of God, cry in the Streets, and in the midst of the People I lift up my Voice, I have nourish'd and

brought up the Children of Men, but they have slighted and despis'd me. I have written, O Man, my sweet Law of the New Testament in thy inward parts, and planted it in the middle of thy Heart, and yet even this Law hath displeas'd thee, tho' it be an undefiled Law, converting the Soul, and a faithful Testimony of my Eternal Love. You have run far away, and hid your self from me your most merciful God and Deliverer, as your Father *Adam* did after his first Transgression, when I was walking in the Garden in the cool of the Evening. What dost thou mean, O strange Son? Whither dost thou fly from the Face of thy most mild God and Redeemer? Am I a cruel Master, that thou runnest so far away from me, and seekest after a better? Consider what thou dost, and how far thou withdrawest from thy own Salvation;

for without a cauſe thou haſt hated thy Soul's moſt precious Remedy, and thy trueſt Liberty. Thy unhappy Soul is now become deſolate as a Widow, which, by thy concurrence with the Divine Grace, might have continued faithful to the Vow of its Eſpouſals, and enjoy'd all the Priviledges of my kindeſt Love; and yet it has abhorr'd me its moſt Faithful Spouſe, and enrich'd its Enemies with its precious Spoils. How is the Gold of my ancient Love obſcur'd! The fair appearance of a good Converſation is now quite chang'd, the Stones of my Temple and Sanctuary lye ſcatter'd at the head of every Street. The habitation of my City *Jeruſalem*, which I lov'd, did not pleaſe thee; but thou haſt aſſociated thy ſelf with the Citizens of *Babylon*, which my Soul hated. Wo to the Soul that departs from

me; for the Terrors of Death ſhall ſet themſelves in Battle-array againſt it, and the pains of Hell ſhall take hold of it; and the young Lions roaring ſhall purſue it in their rage, and hunt it as a Prey forſaken of God: For ſince thou haſt exchang'd the Light of my Grace for the Darkneſs of Sin, and by thy grievous Offences haſt made a horrible night of Darkneſs in thy Soul, all the wild Beaſts of the Infernal Woods ſhall range about thee, and haſten with open Mouth to devour thy Apoſtate Soul. Let me therefore beſeech thee preſently to make a ſtand, and call upon me, and ſay: *Thou art my God and my Guide, I will no longer fly from thee, O my deareſt God. I have too long gone aſtray from thee like fugitive* Cain, *and ſerv'd ſtrange Gods, with whom there is no Salvation, nor any true Liberty to be expected.*

*Behold,*

*Behold, now I return to thee from my very hard Bondage; I earneſtly deſire thy moſt beautiful Light to ſhine out of Darkneſs, and the ſhadow of Death which hath terrifi'd me. I have found by the ſad experience of my Wandrings, that there is nothing truly Good to be found, but only in the moſt Lovely and moſt High God, to whom therefore I conſecrate my Heart and all the Faculties of my Soul.*

## CHAP. II.

### *Of the Sweetneſs of Jeſus Chriſt calling a Sinner to Repentance.*

I Heartily wiſh, my Son, that my Friendſhip, which is more precious than Gold, may be acceptable unto thee, and that thou would hear with the Ears of a

contrite humble Heart, my piercing Voice which moves the Rocks. Like the tender Nursing-Father of *Ephraim* I take care of thee, and my great and faithful Mercy strives with the hardness of thy stony Heart. Thou, according to thy hardness and impenitent Heart, resists my Spirit which is sweeter than Honey, while I according to the riches of my Goodness labour to soften thy Bowels by my innumerable secret Inspirations. Thou flyest from me when I pursue thee, not out of hatred, but from a desire of thy Salvation: I lye in wait for thee, whilst thou art flying, that I may embrace thee with open Arms, and by my Infinite Mildness overcome thy Fierceness. Therefore the Heavens and the Earth admire the Clemency of their Creator, who watcheth so solicitously for the preservation of a most Ungrateful Sinner,

who

who will not take my eaſy Yoke upon him. How long will thy hard Heart kick againſt the pricks of my ſtrong Love? Wilt thou for ever reſiſt the ineſtimable Love of thy God? I might in Juſtice have Condemn'd thee, becauſe thou haſt done wickedly; and haſt caſt off my Yoke, and ſaid, I will not ſerve him; and yet in much Patience I have born with thee, from an earneſt deſire of thy Eternal Happineſs, if perhaps yet thou wilt be converted unto me, and be reconcil'd unto my moſt Merciful Father. Why then delayeſt thou, my deareſt Son? Why putteſt thou off from Day to Day? Suffer me, I pray thee, to diſſolve thy Ice with the ardent Flame of my Love, and to reform thy deform'd Soul, according to the Pattern of the Only-begotten Son of God. O Generation of *Adam*, how long ſhall I ſuffer you? O ſtrange and.

wonderful! It is a thing hidden from the Wiſe and Prudent of the World, who have ſtopt their Ears leſt they ſhould perceive how powerful and piercing my Word is! I, the Son of the moſt High God, ſtand at the Door and knock, deſiring to come in, that I may fill your Houſe with unſpeakable Riches; and yet you refuſe to admit God into your Habitation, who is your Redeemer and your Friend. If you would but once knock thus at the Door of my Houſe, I ſhould quickly open to you at the firſt ſtroke, as I did to *David* my Servant, when he ſigh'd at the Rebuke of *Nathan* my Prophet. My deareſt Son, let my Counſel be acceptable to thee, and by timely Repentance turn to me, thy Peacemaking King, and as a tender-hearted Mother I will love thee, and embrace thee, and

nurſe

nurſe thee up in thy Infancy with my ſweet Milk.

## CHAP. III.

### *Of the Goodneſs of God, and his readineſs to ſpare a Sinner.*

WHither flyeſt thou, my dear-eſt Son, who haſt grievouſly offended me? Am I become to thee like a barren Wilderneſs, that thou ſayeſt in thine Heart, I have gone away and will no more return unto thee? Can a Virgin forget her Ornaments? and a Bride her Nuptial Attire? How then comes it to paſs that thy Soul, which I have eſpous'd with the price of my Blood, hath forſaken me, and forgot me Days without number? I am Goodneſs itſelf which feeds all the Creatures with my ſweet

Bounty, than which nothing can be conceiv'd more Lovely; and yet by an unaccountable Madneſs, thou ſeekeſt for ſomething Good without me. Conſider, O Son, my Goodneſs which ſoftens the hard Rocks, and be thou ſoftned by it; neither truſt to falſe Prophets which Divine to thee falſe Joys beſides me. For certainly, if I am the Chief Goodneſs, whatever thou ſeekeſt without me cannot be Good for thee, tho' thou alone ſhould poſſeſs all the Kingdoms of the World, and all things deſirable to carnal Eyes. 'Tis commonly ſaid, That is Good which all deſire: Yet by a fatal Miſtake thou art ſeduc'd and allur'd by the deceitful Pleaſures of counterfeit Goods, whilſt thou fooliſhly forſakes the only True, Eternal, and Unchangeable Good. O that thou wert wiſe, that thou underſtood this, and would conſider thy latter

ter end! Follow not ſtrange Gods, my Son, for they will certainly turn thy Heart from true Wiſdom: Thou ſhalt look for Light, but ſhall not ſee it, nor yet the riſing of the Morning-Sun. Let my chaſte Law be imprinted in thy inward parts, and liſten to the ſecret whiſpers of my Inſtruction, and of the Catholick Faith wherewith I have enlighten'd thee. Behold, thou believeſt with a ſincere Faith, that I am Infinite Goodneſs, Beauty and Wiſdom, which alone can ſatisfy the Heart of Man; Whither then doſt thou haſten away, while thou offendeſt me, but to infinite Wickedneſs, Baſeneſs and Folly, whereby thy Soul will be defil'd? Is it not more wholeſome Advice to cleave faſt to me, that thou may'ſt enjoy the light of my Countenance, and be ſatisfy'd with the Breaſts of my Conſolation, than to go aſtray with

with thy Vagabond and Runnagate Enemies, where thou cannot have thy Belly fill'd with the Husks of Swine? Return, O Prodigal Son, unto thy Soul's Reſt, and I will embrace thee, as one returning from a far Country, with the Arms of my Mercy, and will ſay to my Servants, as ſoon as I ſee thee, Bring me forth quickly the beſt Robe, and put it on him, and put a Ring on his Hand, and Shoes on his Feet; for my Bowels will earn over my deareſt Son whom I have begotten; I will rejoyce at his Converſion, as he that findeth much Spoil: For I delight in ſhewing Mercy, and according to the greatneſs of my Goodneſs, my Soul melts at the miſery and ſighing of the Poor. Remember, O Son, the mildneſs of my Heart, that ſo thou mayſt underſtand how great is the multitude of my tender Mercies. Read the

Holy

Holy Scriptures, and admire my readineſs to pity and ſpare Sinners, and to comfort the afflicted Soul; and then you will underſtand that I am a good Maſter, and be afraid to depart from me, as you would be afraid of Death. I never lifted up my Spear againſt any, that was willing to ſerve my moſt merciful Father, altho' he had committed moſt grievous Sins. My Servant *David* did but once ſigh, and ſay, *I have ſinned*; and I preſently put away his Sin from him. The Publican accus'd himſelf with a few ſorrowful groans, and preſently he went home juſtify'd and rejoycing. The wicked Servant owed me 10000 Talents, and as ſoon as he fell down and asked me, I ſet him at Liberty, and forgave him all the Debt. The Woman taken in Adultery ſtood trembling, and was vehemently accus'd before me, and I gave

gave her a mild anſwer, which deliver'd her from Condemnation. I ſhew'd a cheerful Countenance to *Mary Magdalen* the Sinner, and was ſo ready to ſpare her, that the Phariſee, who had invited me, marvell'd at it. The Thief which was Crucify'd with me, by one word ſoftned my Bowels, and was preſently made partaker of my Kingdom. Why then does not my Goodneſs, which has appear'd in ſo many illuſtrious inſtances, pleaſe the Sons of *Adam*, but ſtill they ſeek after ſtrange Conſolations! Shun my Son, the Company of Sinners, and by true Repentance ſeek after the light of my Countenance.

CHAP.

## CHAP. IV.

### *Concerning the Wiſdom of God, which a Man forſakes by Sinning.*

O How fooliſhly, my Son, haſt thou departed from me with *Adam* thy Father, who by eating the Forbidden Fruit, endeavour'd to become as God knowing good and evil! This is not the way of my Wiſdom which has a moſt pleaſant reliſh to the Palat of the Heart. I Wiſdom, which came out of the Mouth of the moſt High, am the moſt beautiful light, which enlightens with Eternal brightneſs, the minds of thoſe little ones who reſt quiet under my Diſcipline; but the Proud and Preſumptuous, I throw out of my preſence, that they may ſit in darkneſs and the ſhadow of Death, and not be able to diſcern

between

between their right Hand and their left. Wo to the Sinners whom their wickedneſs hath blinded, that they ſhould not behold me the Son of Righteouſneſs and teacher of Wiſdom, under whom they might learn in a moment the Heavenly Secrets, become more Learned than if they could number all the Stars, and the Sand upon the Sea-ſhore. For certainly, tho' a ſinner, who departs from me, ſhould underſtand all the Arts and Sciences, that are Learned in all the Academies of the World, he would know nothing, becauſe he would not know me in whom all the Treaſures of the Wiſdom of God are hid. And tho' he ſhould ſpeak with the Tongues of Men and Angels, he would be reputed but a Child in my Heavenly City, becauſe he was ignorant of the Word of God, which makes the Tongues of Infants eloquent.

Since

Since theſe things are ſo, what meaneſt thou, my Son, by running thro' all the various Sciences of Men, in which there is no Salvation or Satisfaction? Return now thou art wearied, to me the Fountain of Wiſdom which is ſweeter than Honey, and I will enlarge and ſatisfy thy deſires. Thy Underſtanding can find no Reſt but in me only; do not therefore labour in vain, in ſeeking after deceitful Maſters whom I have not taught. Get thee out of the middle of *Babylon*, and avoid the innumerable anxieties wherewith thy Heart is diſtracted, and I will lead thee into a ſolitary place, and will feed thee with Milk, and teach thee my Goodneſs, Diſcipline and Knowledge; whereby thou ſhalt be wiſer than the Elders, and excel all the Counſellors of *Pharaoh*, and the Diviners of the *Caldeans*. Take away the filthineſs of thy mind,

my

my deareſt Son, and be thou cleans'd, that with pure Eyes thou may'ſt behold my cleareſt light, and I will communicate to thee my Secrets, and inflame thee with the love of Eternal Wiſdom, which delights pure hearts with ineffable joys. Reliſh my Word, and thy Eyes ſhall be open'd to behold my Myſteries, which are more deſirable than the Honey and the Honey-comb: And thy Bones which I have broken, ſhall rejoyce, for I will fill them with moſt chaſte delights, which I have prepar'd for the Penitent, who return from a ſtrange Land to my pleaſant City of *Jeruſalem*, where they Treaſure up true Riches to themſelves.

CHAP.

## CHAP. V.

### *Concerning the Peace of God which is loſt by Sin.*

I The Pacific King, who am Exalted far above all the Kingdoms of the whole Earth, make my Friends partakers of that Peace which paſſeth all underſtanding. For when a Man is in a State of Grace, I dwell in him as in a Nuptial Bed, where all things are quiet, and he enjoys the ſweet Peace of the Sons of God, and hears the delicious Conſort of all the Parts of a Man, conſpiring with one conſent to fulfil my Law; which he was very ſenſible of, who ſaid, *I will ſing unto thee a new ſong, upon an Inſtrument with ten ſtrings will I ſing unto thee.* This Peace is more precious than Gold, and more to be deſir'd than all the Honours, Rich-

es,

es, and Comforts of the whole World; which if the Children of this World ſhould once taſte, they would quickly deſpiſe all Earthly love, and ſigh after me. Conſider therefore, my Son, what thou haſt done, when thou departed from me, and would not ſeek after my Peace, and it was remov'd far from thee; and then there aroſe againſt thy Soul innumerable enemies, who never ſleep, neither ſuffer thee to take any Reſt. Thou thoughteſt to have attain'd and enjoy'd Peace, by ſatisfying thy ſenſitive Appetite and its vain Deſires, whilſt thou liv'd after the manner of the *Gentiles* who have not known me; and yet thou foundeſt no Peace, but anxious cares and vexation of Spirit, ſtings of Conſcience, horrors and fears of my juſt Judgment, like *Cain* who went out from my preſence, and was afraid leſt every one that found him ſhould kill

him.

im. It happen'd to thee what ormerly befel the People of *Iſ-ael*, who abus'd *Jeruſalem* my ity; for *Judah* was driven thence hat he might endure the great Miſery and hard Bondage he had eſerv'd by Sinning againſt me, nd he dwelt among the *Gentiles*, ut neither there did he find any eſt. O how grievouſly does a inner err, who throws off the eace of the Sons of God, and ntangles himſelf in infinite diffi-alties! O how unhappily does a icked Man live who flyes when o Man purſues, and carries about ith him the Sentence of Dam-ation which he has incurr'd! ow long ſhall I cry and invite ee, O ungrateful Son, to my anquet of Dainties, which will ive reſt unto thy Soul, and make ee glad with the participation f my Peace and Love? Return, y Son, unto thy reſt, which I ave purchas'd for thee by the

pains

pains of my Death, and let it pleaſe thee to have one heart, and one Soul with me. Let us make this day a Compact of a moſt faithful Agreement, which ſhall never have an end. I will ſpare thee my dear Friend, and will not remember againſt thee thy former Offences. Give me thy heart, that we may enter into a League of Friendſhip, in my Blood which I have ſhed for thee. Break off the Yoke from thy Neck, O Captive Son, and aſpire after my Liberty; for I will be thy moſt faithful helper upon all occaſions, in thy Tribulation and diſtreſs: I have engraven thee upon my Heart, and can never forget thee. This only I deſire, that thou would return unto me, and for the future make good uſe of my ſweet converſation, and I will cauſe righteouſneſs and abundance of Peace to ariſe within thee, which ſhall remain as long as the Sun and

longer

onger than the Moon, Behold he gaping wound in my ſide, nd my hands pierc'd with the Nails; Joyn the ſide of thy heart o my ſide, and thy Hands to my Hands, and be thou converted to he moſt precious Peace of thy Redeemer and Friend.

## CHAP. VI.

### *Of the Protection of God, which a Man forfeits by Sinning.*

I the preſerver of Men take care of my Servants, as a Nurſe oes cheriſh her little Infant, for *le who keepeth* Iſrael *will neither umber nor ſleep.* I keep my riends as charily as the Apple f my Eye; neither will *I ſuf- r the rod of the wicked to reſt pon the lot*, or inheritance, *of the righteous*,

*righteous*, leſt perhaps the righteous being too much afflicted, put forth their hands unto iniquity. From the beginning of the World was it never heard, that any Mother did ſo ardently love, and carefully tend her only Son, as I do my righteous Servants, to whom I am more than a Mother, and love their Souls as my beſt beloved Spouſes. They that faithfully ſerve me ſhall not need to fear the cold and Snow; for my Domeſticks are double-cloath'd, becauſe they have a good Maſter. Wherefore then, O Son, haſt thou departed from me, and expos'd thy ſelf to ſo many dangers and Robbers, who lye in wait for thee, ſaying, *God hath forſaken him* for his Sins, *perſecute and take him, for there is none to deliver him?* Who will defend thee from the many Oxen and fat Bulls which compaſs thee, if thou be not under my Protection?

tection? All the wild Beasts of the Woods will make haste to kill thee, unless they be sensible that I am thy Keeper. The Sword shall devour thee without, and fear shall consume thee within; thou shalt be a Vagabond and Fugitive upon the Earth. Hast not thou consider'd how Malefactors are afraid who offend Earthly Kings? They are never at rest, but are frighted with every noise as if it were the shadow of Death, because they apprehend, that the Ministers of the offended King may rush in suddenly upon them: How much more will the fear of Death, make thee anxious, if thou want my Protection, and be deliver'd up as the Servant of Sin to thy Persecutors? 'Tis wonderful to see, how mad Sinners are, who have deliver'd up their Souls into the hands of their Enemies, and never con-

ſider that they want my ſtrength to ſupport them. Return, my Deareſt Son, to me thy Protector, and I who have broke the heads of the Dragons will defend thee: I will lead thee ſafely thro' a Deſert Land, a place of Horror, and a vaſt Wilderneſs, if thou continueſt faithfully in my fear. I will diſturb the Princes of *Edom*, and fear ſhall ſeize upon ſtrong *Moab*, while thou paſſeſt thro' the way of Life under my Protection. Turn with thy whole Heart to me thy Keeper and Teacher, and ſeek not after the weak Props of the World and its Followers, and I alone will be thy Leader, and will be to thee like an Eagle provoking her young ones to fly, while ſhe flies over them: And thou ſhalt know by experience, that one Day ſpent in my Courts, and under my Protection, is better than a thouſand elſewhere;

and

and I will deliver thee in time of diſtreſs, becauſe thou haſt ſet thy Heart upon me, which is fortified with a firm Confidence of my Infinite Goodneſs and Mercy.

## CHAP. VII.

### *Of the loſs of the Divine Grace, which a Sinner forfeits.*

ALL the Treaſures of the World, compar'd with divine Grace, are but Duſt and Aſhes, and are accounted nothing worth. So great is the heighth and depth, the excellency and beauty of my Grace, that all who judge of things wiſely, are raviſh'd with incredible Admiration of it. Whence it comes to paſs, that my Servants, whoſe Eyes are enlightned, are affected with great Grief and Compaſſion for their Neighbours, when they

fall from a ſtate of Grace into a ſtate of Mortal Sin. And if thou, my Son, doſt well conſider this, thou wilt quickly be Converted to me, from the ſenſe of the great Miſery thou haſt endur'd by ſinning. Thy Soul was my ſweet Spouſe, cloath'd in a Veſture of Gold, wrought about with divers Colours, whoſe Beauty the Sun and Moon admir'd. So great was her Comelineſs while ſhe continu'd faithful to the Vow of her Eſpouſals, that ſhe wonderfully delighted my Eyes. The Daughter of *Jeruſalem* was adorn'd with Jewels, beautiful as a Dove, ſhining with the native brightneſs and ſweetneſs of her Countenance. She was conformable to her Pattern, who is ſo Bright, that the Morning-ſtars give no light when compar'd with him. She was very rich with the Riches of true Vertue, which neither Ruſt nor Moth

doth

doth conſume. But after ſhe had ſinn'd, all her Beauty departed from the Daughter of *Sion*; and from ſo great Happineſs, ſhe fell into extreme Miſery, ſo that the Heavens were aſtoniſh'd at this change. For ſo great, my Son, is the filthineſs and baſeneſs of the Sin thou haſt committed, that thou art become all over leprous, horrible for thy intolerable Rottenneſs, and the miſerable Food of crawling Worms. What means this? How is the pleaſantneſs of my Paradiſe defaced, and a fruitful Land turn'd into barrenneſs, for the Sins of thoſe who dwell in it! How has thy Soul, contrary to the Vow of thy Eſpouſals, departed from me, and how is it defil'd with many Lovers that have debauch'd it! Return, my Son, to my Grace and Friendſhip, and re-aſſume the brightneſs of thy Face; and be not ſo mad, as to live any longer

in ſo great Miſery and Poverty. Put on thy moſt precious and beautiful Nuptial Attire, that thou may'ſt pleaſe me, and lean on my Boſom at the Great Supper, which I have prepar'd for my deareſt Elect. I counſel thee to buy of me Royal Apparel without Money, and without Price, that thou may'ſt walk thro' the Street of the Holy City clad in Purple, among the famous Sons of *Sion*, who are cloathed with the Gold of their firſt Love.

## CHAP. VIII.

### *Of the Benefits of the Communion of Saints, which a Man loſes by Sin.*

WO to him that is alone, for if he falls, he has none to help him up! But bleſſed is the Man, who by a Communion

munion of Love, is partaker with all thoſe that Fear and Love me, and keep my Commandments: And certainly, he that is united to me by Grace, is united to all my Members, that are animated with the heavenly Life of my Grace, which is a kind of moſt faithful Friendſhip, than which there is nothing more Lovely among thoſe that live pleaſantly upon Earth. My Angels and Saints being united to me by Grace, are moſt faithful Friends to every one that loves me. And thou, my Son, when thou walked before me unto all well-pleaſing, enjoy'd theſe Conſolations and Priviledges of the Righteous, which are more precious than Gold; thou waſt joyn'd to my Saints, whoſe Names are written in the Book of Life, and all their Goods by a communication of Friendſhip belong'd to thee, my living Member: And I, as Head

of my Spouſe, the Church, did influence thee with ſuch vital Motions of my Charity, as thoſe whereby I admoniſh the Hearts of them that love me, and ſeek my beautiful Face; for my Spirit did quicken and excite thee, and inflame thee with ardent Deſires of the Eternal Fruition, wherewith my faithful Soldiers, when they come weary'd from this Earth, are plentifully rewarded and ſatisfy'd. But now thy Face is blackned with Sin, as with dirty Coals, and thou ly'ſt bury'd in a ſtate of Death, by being depriv'd of the Communion of Saints, which is the extremeſt Miſery. What Friends wilt thou find, my Son, if my Friends do not favour thee? What Society will do thee good, when thou wanteſt the Society of Angels, and my Servants? Who will comfort thee in diſtreſs, when thou dwelleſt with Scorpions, and wanteſt the harmo-

harmony of Heaven? Return to the Company of the Citizens of my City *Jeruſalem*, and to the Feaſts which are celebrated by the Communion of the ſweeteſt Love: That thou may'ſt live happily the reſt of this mortal Life, and afterwards may'ſt be tranſlated to the Communion of the Church Triumphant, where will be the moſt pleaſant Peace, and full and perfect Union. Depart from the Tabernacles of Sinners, who do not love thee, nor yet themſelves; for *He that loveth Sin, hateth his own Soul.* It will be much more uſeful and delightful to thee, my Son, to aſſociate with my living Members and choſen Veſſels, that thou may'ſt learn Wiſdom in the School of my Meekneſs, and be nouriſh'd with the ſtrong Meat of thoſe Chriſtians, who are growing up to that meaſure of Love which is higher than the Heavens. The

World passeth away, and the Lusts thereof; but the bond of my Love shall never pass away, but shall for ever unite to me my most beloved Servants, to whom I have given a Kingdom, that they may eat and drink at my Table of the delicious Feast of my Paradise.

## CHAP. IX.

### *Of the Inconstancy to which a Sinner is exposed.*

*Jerusalem* sinn'd against me, and therefore she became unstable, and could find no rest. A Fool is as changeable as the Moon; and therefore since every Sinner is a Fool, he suffers the just Punishment of his Transgression; for he never continues in one State, but changes his Designs every Hour. He has departed from the Firmness

and

and Conſtancy which he had in me, his God and his Keeper, who am Unchangeable: And therefore he wanders, as an unſtable Vagabond, not knowing whither he goes, and finding no place where he may reſt the Soles of his Feet. All his Perſecutors apprehend him in the narrow ways, whilſt he endeavouring to make his eſcape, is continually ſhifting places, until his Evil-deeds at laſt overtake him, and bring him to Deſtruction. Wo to that Soul that has departed from me: For he every-where meets with Briars and Thorns, and Night and Day his ſleep ſhall depart from his Eyes. To Day, a Sinner ſeeks after his Friends; to Morrow he ſhuns them, becauſe they are unfaithful. One Day he ſpends in Sports and Luxury, to Morrow he mourns, becauſe by his Riotous-living he has waſted his Subſtance. To

Day

Day he ſeeks after the Honours of the World, to Morrow he ſhuns them, being under diſgrace for his Sins. What thinkeſt thou then, my Son, who ſitteſt upon the Wheel of this World, which is always turning about? Why doſt thou not turn to me, who am thy Centre, and Salvation, thy Strength and thy Conſtancy? Haſt thou not learned by daily Experience how wavering and inconſtant the Thoughts of Men are? How uncertain the Events of Providence are, wherein *Time and Chance happens to all things?* Know for certain, my Son, without my Mercy, thou art like Chaff, or a dry Leaf, which the Wind drives to and fro, and can ſettle nowhere. Now thou wilt be merry, an Hour hence thou wilt be ſad; to Morrow thou wilt be griev'd for thy Weakneſs, and the next Day after, thou wilt

wilt be frighted with the fear of Death; ſometimes the care of Temporal Affairs, ſometimes Ambition, ſometimes Thirſt, ſometimes Hunger will torment thee, unleſs thou repent and turn thy Thoughts upon me, and offer thy ſelf wholly to me upon the Altar of thy Heart. If thou ſeekeſt me with thy whole Heart, nothing ſhall diſturb thee, neither Death nor Life, nor the World, nor Hell, nor any Creature, viſible or inviſible. For by the Teſtimony of thy Conſcience, thou ſhalt be like a Lyon, the ſtrongeſt of all Beaſts, and be afraid of nothing that thou meets with. I will fix the Inconſtancy of *Adam* thy Father, and ſtrengthen thee with my Right-hand: I will make thee as a Pillar of Iron, and a Brazen-wall againſt all the Enemies of thy Soul. They ſhall fight againſt thee, but ſhall not prevail, becauſe when thou art

art Penitent, I will change thee into another Man, and make thee partaker of my Grace and Courage.

## CHAP. X.

### *Of the Remorse of Conscience wherewith a Sinner is tormented.*

MY Son, unless thou return to me with thy whole Heart, thy own wickedness shall accuse thee, and thy Sin shall rebuke thee, for by the same things in which a man Sins, by the same he shall be punish'd. It is the just Judgment of God, that he who has forsaken me his God, should feel within himself remorse of Conscience, and anxious Thoughts arising from the fear of Death and of Hell. It is the just Judgment of God, that among the for-

forbidden Joys of this World, which he delights to purſue contrary to my Law, he ſhould be prick'd with the ſtings of an aking Heart, foreſeeing its own Damnation. The terrors of Death march in battle-aray againſt the Sinner, tho' he hunts after Pleaſures; neither can there be any Peace to the Wicked, who is accus'd by his own Conſcience, from which he can never fly. This Remorſe is bred out of Sin, as a Worm out of Wood, and ſhows me to be a juſt Judge, and the Sinner to be a Traytor who has ſold me for a ſmall price. Think of theſe things, my Son, and thou wilt perceive, That it is an evil and bitter thing in thee, to forſake the Lord thy Creator and Benefactor, and that the fear of him was not before thy eyes. Doſt thou not ſee that all things ſucceed unhappily while thou flyeſt from me, and that with an anxious

xious mind thou drinks of the troubled Waters of the *Egyptians*, when thou mighteſt by my Grace have returned to my deareſt City of *Jeruſalem*, and there have drunk of the pure Water of *Jordan*, and alſo have waſh'd thyſelf in it, and been made whiter than Snow. Wherefore then doſt thou reſiſt the attractives of my Love, calling and inviting thee to my Friendſhip? Caſt off, my Son, five Yokes of Oxen which thou haſt fooliſhly bought, and freely take my own ſweet Yoke upon thee, where thou ſhalt no longer be haraſs'd with the ſtings of Conſcience, but ſhalt find reſt to thy wearied Soul. Seek after the heavenly Serenity, and the Peace which paſſes all underſtanding; and ceaſe from theſe ſolicitous cares wherewith thou art vexed. Call upon me, and I will anſwer thee in my ſtill whiſpers, which will produce in thee true Joys,

and

and allay the Commotions of thy inward parts. I will comfort thee, and ſpeak inwardly to thy heart, if thou wilt turn to me, and confeſs to me as thy heart ſhall direct thee, when thou haſt attain'd the Liberty and Reſt, and other moſt precious Privileges of the Sons of God. Deſpiſe the counſel of the buſie traders of this World, who tear the breaſt in pieces with various diſtracting Cares, and follow only my moſt wholeſom Counſel, and thou ſhalt ſee that I will ſcatter all the devices of thine Enemies, and create in thee a new Spirit, whereby thy youth ſhall be renewed like an Eagle, that thou may enjoy my moſt deſirable Peace and Security.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XI.

### *Concerning the Hardneſs of Heart, which a Sinner Contracts by long Continuance in Sin.*

I Am Juſt and have loved Juſtice: my Countenance hath beheld Equity. The Sinner hath rejected me, and reſiſted my innumerable Inſpirations, whereby I would have ſoftned his Heart; and therefore I reject him, and hinder the Dew of my Grace from dropping upon him. I invited *Pharaoh* by external Signs and Prodigies, which I wrought by the hand of *Moſes* my Servant, and by my internal Inſpirations which this miſerable Sinner felt; but when he reſiſted my great Mercy, I ſuffer'd his Heart to grow harder than a Flint, or the hardeſt Rock, until he perſecuted

*Iſrael*

*Iſrael* my People, and ſunk like Lead in the mighty Waters. I anointed *Saul* King over *Iſrael*, when he was yet but ſmall in his own Eyes, and follow'd me like a young Boy; but after he begun, and continued to reſiſt the Motions and Inſpirations of my Spirit, I threw him off, until at laſt leaning upon his own Sword, he died a horrible Death. I treated the unhappy *Judas* my Diſciple, as a ſingle-hearted and faithful Man; but after he had reſiſted my ſweet Words, and Inſpirations, and hardned his Heart againſt me, I left him to himſelf until he became like a Devil, and at laſt having hang'd himſelf he burſt in two in the middle, and all his Bowels guſh'd out, through the bitterneſs of his Soul. What therefore doſt thou expect, my Son, who haſt ſinned and departed from me? Why doſt thou continue in the State of Damnation,

tion, hardning thy Soul ſtill mor
and more, leſt it ſhould be over
come by my infinite Sweetneſ
and Patience? Muſt I for eve
knock at the Gate of thy Houſ
to tame thy wild Fierceneſs? Re
turn, my Son, and commune wit
thine own Heart, and do no
throw thy ſelf into extreme Dan
ger of hardneſs, by making th
Wound Incurable. Haſt thou no
heard of the ſad Sentence tha
will be paſt upon a hard Heart a
the laſt Day, and that the Sinne
is faſt bound by the Cords of hi
own Sins? for when a Sinner onc
plunges himſelf into ſinful Ex
ceſſes, he deſpiſes me; but be
fore he arrives at this contempt
he is ſomewhat affected and mo
ved by the inward Inſpirations o
my Goodneſs: Afterwards by lit
tle and little he grows cold, an
is leſs ſenſible of my impulſes
until at laſt his Heart grows ſto
ny, and he becomes ſo inſenſible
that

hat he cares not for my Admo-
itions, but like a wild unbroken
Horſe he ranges through the
Paſtures of the World, haſtning
o eternal Flames. Wo be to thee,
my Son, unleſs thou ſuddenly re-
urn unto me. Remember thy
Salvation, and my Glory which I
ave prepared for thoſe true Pe-
itents, who have waſh'd their
Garments in my Blood. Uſe now
he Remedies of mercy, leſt thou
e hardned and deliver'd over to
reprobate Senſe. If thou hark-
eſt to me, I will melt the Ice of
hy Heart, and my Spirit will
low, and the Waters of Com-
unction will flow, which will
aſh away thy filth. Embrace
his wholeſome Advice of thy
Redeemer, who is willing to ſpare
hee, and to change thy conditi-
n. If thou wilt turn unto me, I
ill imprint in thy inward parts a
enſe of Contrition and Love, and
hou ſhalt rejoyce for the renew-

ing

ing of thy Heart, as conquerors rejoyce when they have taken the Spoil; and celebrate thy new birth, and ſweetly ſing forth the Praiſes of my invincible and victorious Mercy.

## CHAP. XII.

### *Of the Deſpair which a Sinner ſometimes falls into.*

COnſider, my Son, that there is no other Name under Heaven by which thou can be ſav'd but mine. Do not deceive thy ſelf, by placing thy Confidence in the King of *Egypt*, who is but a broken Reed, on which if a Man lean, it will pierce thro' his hand. I have overcome the World, Death and Hell, and therefore he that offends me, and purſues the Favours and Pleaſures of ſuch Men, as are not partakers of my Victo-

Victory, falls into that Dejection of Mind which is a moſt bitter Puniſhment. He wants my Grace, whereby a Man is begotten again to a lively hope of an eternal Inheritance, and ſeeing he does nothing but what is contrary to this Hope, his Spirit is broken and dejected, even into the pit of ſad Deſpair, which repreſents the State of the Damned. This is the Fruit of Ambition in ſeeking the Honour of Men, whoſe names are written on Earth. This is the Fruit of Covetouſneſs, which with an inſatiate deſire lays up Treaſures upon Earth. This is the fruit of Luxury, which makes a Man Drunk with carnal Pleaſures, ſo that he never minds the moſt pure Joys of my Spirit. This is the fruit of Wrath and Malice, which makes Mens Feet ſwift to ſhed Blood, and careleſs of being reckon'd among my meek Servants, who ſhall poſſeſs the Land of the Living.

ing. Lastly, This is the fruit of all Sins when Wickedness encreases to a great height, and the Soul abhors all that is good, which is the only way to eternal Life. What dost thou do then my Son? Why dost thou lye still in that lamentable state of Enmity, which produces the fruit of Despair, and hastens thee on to Death and Hell? Why dost thou not take pity of thy Soul languishing for want of strength? Consider thy Dissolution. and the fury wherewith thou runs to the Flames, having laid aside all care of thy Eternal Salvation, as if thou hadst no hope. Thou dost foolishly, my Son, to be thus despondent, and dost not consider that I am Omnipotent, and form'd thee of the Dust of the Ground. Cast away thy filthiness, and lay aside the weight of thy Sins, which bend thy Soul downward, and drive thee into Despair, and seek after

me

me the Author of thy Hope and thy Redemption, and thou ſhalt be deliver'd from the hard bondage that oppreſſes thee, and ſuck in the air of my Spirit, which will quicken thy Bones. Turn to me by *a godly ſorrow which worketh Repentance unto Salvation*, and at the ſame time makes glad the Soul, while it is in the pangs of a New-birth, and receives from me the Pledge of an Eternal Inheritance. So ſhalt thou have hope, and thy ſolicitous Soul, in ſailing thro' the tempeſtuous Sea of this World, ſhall be founded upon the Anchor of a moſt firm Hope, which I have purchas'd by moſt precious Blood, and ineſtimable Love.

## CHAP. XIII.

### *Of the Danger of Infidelity, to which a Sinner is expos'd.*

I, The Son of the Most High God, *am the Light of the World*, and in my just Judgment I punish the Sinner with inward Darkness, that blinds the Understanding; which is so grievous and formidable a Punishment, that sometimes the miserable Sinner by multiplying his Sins, does so far depart from the true Light, that he falls into Infidelity. He has departed from me, and lov'd this World's Goods more than me; whence it comes to pass, that his deprav'd Will does so corrupt the Judgment of the Understanding, that at last he revolts from the Catholick Faith. Thus thou mayst see, my Son, what has hapned to many Sinners, who at first believ'd in me, how by increasing their sins of Covetousness,

vetouſneſs, Pride, Gluttony or Luxury, they have erred from the Faith, and pierc'd themſelves thro' with many ſorrows. Wo to them who hate my moſt pure Light, which diſcovers the Eternal and Unchangeable Good, and prefers it to all Created good Things: It had been better for theſe Men that they had never been born; for it is an extreme unhappineſs to err from my Faith, and to caſt off my Yoke thro' the darkneſs of the Underſtanding. And therefore, my Son, conſidering what has hapned to others like unto thee, do thou come unto me, leſt perhaps being hardned thro' the multitude of thy Sins, and growing weary of my undefiled Law, thou be tempted to think amiſs of my Goodneſs, and thy Heart being unſettled by the love of this World's Goods, thou deliver thy ſelf up to Vices and Luſts, until at laſt thou arrive at that prodigious heighth of Wickedneſs, as to deny my Faith. Thus

thou ſeeſt, my deareſt Son, whither thou art going, while thou continueſt in Sin: Be not ſo cruel to thy ſelf as to run on ſwiftly to thy Deſtruction. Take heed thou deſpiſe not my Admonitions and Inſtructions; do not ſtop thy Ears againſt them thro' the allurements of Carnal Love, which has drowned innumerable Men in the Pit of Perdition. The Time is ſhort, make uſe of thy Talents until I come, for then I ſhall render unto thee either eternal Life, or everlaſting Flames. If thou put away from the midſt of thee thy Sins and thy Idols; if thou returneſt and calleſt upon me thy God, Redeemer and Preſerver, I will ſo enlighten thy Eyes that thou ſhalt never ſleep unto Death; I will protect thee, and my Candle ſhall ſhine upon thy Head: And thou ſhalt rejoyce in my moſt beautiful and bleſſed Light, which will direct thy ſteps in the Night of this mortal Life, and lead thee to my

my Brightneſs thrô the ways of Eternity: I will open thy Eyes with one Ray of my Infinite Light, and when thou art rouz'd out of thy dead ſleep, thou wilt wonder how for the time paſt, thou haſt walked in Darkneſs and the ſhadow of Death, and wilt love me thy Deliverer, with all thy Heart, and honour me with the Sacrifice of perpetual Praiſes. Ariſe therefore quickly, my dearly beloved Son, ariſe out of Darkneſs and the horrible Pit wherein thou lyeſt, and admit the Light of Heaven which will chee. thee, before the laſt Night come, which will be the laſt Puniſhment of Sinners who deſpiſe my preſent Inſpirations and Mercies. Meditate on theſe things in the ſecret Chamber of thy Heart, and turn to the Eaſt, where I the Sun of Righteouſneſs aroſe, who deſires to enlighten thee, and to fill thy beloved Soul with the brightneſs of the Saints.

## CHAP. XIV.

### *Of the miserable Death of a Sinner.*

THE Sinner, while he lives, runs thrô the Fields of this World, like a Bull that is fatted to be a Sacrifice, the wretched Man never thinks that he will be catch'd by Death, which lies in wait for him like an insidious Robber, to throw him into the Chains of Darkness, with which he shall continue bound until he has paid the uttermost Farthing. He drinks, he eats, he plays, he laughs, he swears and curses, and while he thus commits Sin without restraint, some mortal Disease suddenly seizes upon him, and he is call'd to Judgment. O how bitter is his pain when pale Death approaches him! O what trembling and horror does seize the Sinner, when he sees that Death will quickly make a sad and eternal separation between him and his most beloved enjoyments! O how dole-

fully

fully in that diſtreſs will he ſay or ſigh out theſe words: *The ſorrows of Death compaſſed me about, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me,* Pſ. 116. 3. Wo to the wicked Man when he is dying; for all the floods of Pains and Sorrows ſuddenly ruſh in upon him, that he may have ſome foretaſte of the Torments of Hell, who ſlighted the eternal Conſolations which were in his Offer. Now the unlawful Feaſts are paſt and gone; now the forbidden Plays are ended; now his Kinſmen and Friends do fail; now his Riches will not profit him; and all that was formerly delightful, is now turn'd into an argument for Sorrow and Deſperation. The wretched Soul, which reſiſted my Inſpirations, is afraid to go out of the Body into the Flames, and therefore it draws back as much as it can, if perhaps there be any one to comfort it in this extreme Diſtreſs. But in vain does it ſtrive, for the Hour of Death is at hand,

when all its desirable things must be left behind, which it formerly enjoy'd, while it transgress'd my righteous and pleasant Law. All its Sins appear before it as a Terrible Army, that it may see what a sad and bitter end its past Joys are come to. The Devils, like so many mad Dogs, stand waiting for their Prey, which is fast bound with innumerable Chains of Guilt, that they may drag it unto Punishment. The foolish Man would not appease me when he had time, and now he has none that he can look unto for help. All his Persecutors now seize upon him in his Distress, and with a cruel mind seek to drink of his Blood. At last my just Sentence being past, the Vessel of Wrath fitted for Destruction is haled away to Torments. Such is the Fate of an unjust Man, whom his Evil-deeds bring to Destruction. What thinkest thou of this, O my Son, who hast sinned? What expectest thou?

Does

Does not thy Mind dread to hear of theſe things, which a dying Sinner is forc'd to ſuffer? Turn therefore to thy God who can deliver thee from the Wrath to come, and comfort thee when thou art departing out of this Life, by his infinite Grace and unvaluable Mercy. Be greatly afraid of my Anger and Juſtice while thou liveſt, that when thou comeſt to dye thou mayſt feel my Paternal Bowels; for he that fears me as a ſevere Judge in his Life-time, ſhall find me a moſt merciful Father at his Death. Bleſſed are they who keep my ways with their whole Heart, and are mindful of their latter end; *They ſhall not be afraid for the Terror by Night, when they ſhall ſpeak with their Enemies in the Gate: i. e.* When they ſhall depart out of this Life, to which their ſucceeds an eternal Night of Sin, or the eternal Light of the Juſt whom I have loved. Follow me, my Son, and let my

Law cleave to thy inward parts, and the Torments of Death ſhall not touch thee, but thou ſhalt moſt ſweetly reſt in my Peace.

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## CHAP. XV.

### *Of the moſt bitter ſenſe a Dying Sinner hath of the Glory he has loſt.*

ATtend, my Son, to what I ſay, For *my Mouth ſhall ſpeak of Wiſdom, and the meditation of my Heart ſhall be of Underſtanding*, Pſal. 49. 3. If a Sinner knew what would be the end of all his Pleaſure, and the ſting which remains fix'd in his Soul after the commiſſion of Sin, he would abhor Sin as Hell, and fly from it as from the Face of a Serpent. But what he is not ſenſible of, while he is beſotted with the pleaſure of Sin, that he perceives at the Hour of Death, when the pleaſure is gone, and there remains only the

the remorſe of Conſcience, and the guilt of eternal Puniſhment. Amongſt other things which miſerably torture the dying Sinner, the moſt bitter ſenſe of the Happineſs he has loſt, afflicts him more than the loſs of any thing in the World could do. The wretched Man conſiders how eaſily he might have attain'd Eternal Joys *by patient continuance in well-doing*; he knows that at the Hour of Death my Servants depart out of the Body, Conquerors over Death and Hell, and aſcend from the Dens of the Lions, and the Mountains of the Leopards, to gather the fruits of the Victory they have obtain'd. He ſees that he might have been one in the number of thoſe who exult in Glory, and eternally Triumph for the Conqueſt they have got; and therefore his Soul pines away with intimate Sorrow and Dejection of Mind, which would move a Heart of Stone, if it ſhould be known by any Man alive.

For

For the Sinner beholding the greatneſs of his Miſery, is conſum'd with the ſad ſight of his hopeleſs condition, and ſays; *Alas, how miſerable am I? Wo's me, how quickly are all my Joys paſt and gone! How ſoon am I come to the Gates of Death! I might by a timely* Repentance, *not only have redeem'd my ſelf from Eternal Flames, but alſo have obtain'd the Infinite Conſolations of God. O how well might I have employ'd my ſelf in Works of Piety, to which a very great Reward is given! I ſhould now have rejoyc'd with ineffable Conſolation, when the Morning of that Day appears which ſhall never have an end. O who can now call time back again, and give me ſpace for* Repentance, *that after* Mourning, Laughter *may ſuceeed?* For, Heavineſs may endure for a Night, but Joy cometh in the Morning, *Pſal.* 30.5. *Who will grant me but one Hour of true Contrition to waſh away the filth of my Soul with a flood of* Tears, *that*

I

*I may find Eternal Reſt in the Houſe of the Lord, and in the admirable Courts of our God! Muſt I therefore always want the City of the Living God, whom I have grievouſly offended and provoked to anger? Wo's me, how quickly am I hal'd away to Torment, becauſe I have deſpiſed Eternal Comfort!* Behold, Son, after what manner a dying Sinner laments the loſs of my Eternal Glory, from which he is excluded, his Conſcience bearing witneſs againſt him, that he would not when he had time, ſeek after a Cure from me. Be merciful to thy ſelf, my Son, and make good uſe of the Remedies prepar'd of my Blood, which I ſhed for thee. *Occupy till I come*, Luke 19. 3. and turn to me, at leaſt upon proſpect of the Reward, that thou mayſt live with me in my moſt pleaſant Paradiſe. Waſh thy ſelf in the Bath of Repentance, that thou mayſt be counted worthy to dwell in the *New Jeruſalem*, which

is

is triumphant in Heaven. Break thrô all the Delays and Impediments of thy Salvation, by thy juſt Fear, and cordial Love of me; and run ſwiftly thrô the Narrow-way that leadeth unto Life, that thou mayſt enter into the moſt pleaſant Paſtures of my Lambs, who have imitated my Candor and Innocence.

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## CHAP. XVI.

### *Of dragging a Sinner to Eternal Puniſhment.*

THE Days of Man are but few, and the number of his Months are with me. I have appointed by an Eternal Decree his bounds, which he cannot paſs. Wherefore in vain does the Sinner, when he is near to Death, ſeek to look backwards, ſince none can alter my purpoſes. *It is appointed for all Men once to die*, althô they be Juſt; but to the Unjuſt

Unjuſt there ſucceeds a ſecond Death, which they have deſerv'd by ſinning; and therefore a Sinner, when the inſtant of the firſt Death approaches, being full of Deſperation and Horror, is dragg'd to the ſecond Death, and ſent into Darkneſs, and the infernal Torments, which ſhall never have an end. If thou ſaweſt, my Son, how fiercely the Devils do ruſh upon their Prey, and inſult over the dying Man, thou would tremble and be horribly afraid, and haſten to return unto me, leſt thou ſhouldſt ſuffer ſuch dreadful things. The wretched Soul is dragg'd to the place of Puniſhment, and thruſt down into that Pit, where is the ſhadow of Death, and nothing but Confuſion and Eternal Horror dwells. And ſeeing itſelf at laſt brought into the ſtate of Impenitence and Damnation, it rages and frets againſt me, and againſt itſelf more furiouſly than can be thought or expreſs'd. The Devils, whom

whom it obey'd, like ſo many hungry Wolves leap upon it, that they may tread under foot the wretched Creature, which, whilſt it liv'd in this World, trod under foot my righteous Law, and rejected my great Mercy. O what howling of Infernal Dogs does now grate thoſe Ears, that would not hearken to my Words, that were ſofter than Oyl! O what fearful Sights do terrify thoſe Eyes, who lov'd Corporal Beauty more than me! O what Madneſs does now torture that Soul, which refus'd to enjoy ſweet Communion with me! It is always waſting without being conſum'd, and always dying without end; for when the Hand of my Juſtice is ſtretch'd out, it will not ceaſe to torment my Enemies, and to turn upon them the wheel of Pains and Sorrows for ever. Wherefore, my Son, think before-hand of this moſt ſad ſtate of Damnation, into which thy Sins will bring thee,

and

and return to me before the Night comes on, and thou be deliver'd into the Paws of the Lions roaring againſt thee. Reſcue now thy ſelf by my Grace from the corruption of that Filth, which makes the Soul abominable, and worthy of an Eternal Priſon; and in that dreadful Hour I will deliver thee from the Hand of the Dog, and ſave thee from the Lion's Mouth by my Infinite Power, and the faithful Aid of my Right-hand. Delay not the time of thy Repentance, but take care to prevent me by an humble Confeſſion of thy Sins, and the Sorrows of a Contrite Heart; and I will be thy moſt ſtrong Helper, and will humble thy falſe Accuſer, who is very anxious and impatient at thy Salvation, which I have purchaſed with my Blood. I do earneſtly deſire to ſave the moſt dear Prey of thy Soul; Be not therefore ungrateful, and perſevere in a ſtate of Enmity to me; but turn to thy moſt

Gracious

Gracious Redeemer, who with open Arms expects thee, and I will accept the Sacrifice of thy Heart, when it is ſoftned and prepared to receive my Inſpirations and Mercies; and this Sacrifice ſhall pleaſe me better *than a fatted Calf, or a Bullock that hath Horns and Hoofs: For I will not eat the fleſh of Bulls and Calves, or drink the blood of Goats.* But the Sacrifice of thy Praiſe, and Converſion, wherein I delight, will honour me, and I will eſpouſe thy moſt beloved Soul by reconciling it to my ſelf, and repairing the loſſes of my Grace.

## CHAP. XVII.

### *Of the Reſurrection of the Soul by true Repentance.*

ALthô none of thoſe things I have mention'd, ſhould move thee, my Son, to Repent, and ſeek after

after my Peace, and ineſtimable Friendſhip; yet at leaſt the Life of Divine Grace, to which true Penitents ariſe from the death of Sin, ſhould induce thee to turn preſently unto me, the Author of that Life, and of that Light which ſhall never ſet. For ſo great is the Dignity, Sublimity and Comelineſs of my Grace, by which I dwell in the Soul of the Juſt Man, that all the Beauty and Grandeur of the World muſt appear abominable, when compar'd with it. If thou could once ſee, my deareſt Son, that Reſurrection which is made by my Grace, thou would deſpiſe all the Riches of the World, as Droſs and Dung, and would ſell all the Goods in thy Houſe to buy this precious Pearl of my Grace. Remember, my Son, what thou haſt learn'd from the Holy Scriptures, and my Inſpirations: How my Body being diſfigur'd by my moſt bitter Paſſion, in the moment of my Reſurrection, was

was so renew'd and refin'd that it exceeded the Snow for whiteness, and the Sun for brightness, and appear'd as a Body of most pure Light, like the Body of the Only-begotten Son of God. After this manner, thou ought to consider, my Son, the Resurrection of thy Soul, *which was dead in Sins*, and is reviv'd by the Grace of God: For in that very Moment of its Resurrection, it is chang'd from the terrible Image of the Devil into the Likeness of God; it is translated from Infernal Darkness to a most Serene Light; from the baseſt Deformity, to the sweetest Beauty, such as would soften even the hard Stones. I who am the Spouse of the Soul which turns from the adultery of Sin to my Bed, forgetting the injury that has been done me, am taken with the Love of my Dove returning to the Ark with a Branch of green Olives, and receive it into my closest Embraces. I at the same time adorn my Beloved,

loved, being now redeem'd from the Bondage of *Pharaoh*, with Divine Vertues, that ſo ſhe may be preſented before my moſt Merciful Father; and being ſet off with the Jewels of the Redemption, purchaſed by my Blood, ſhe may be reckon'd among the Daughters of *Sion*, clad with the Royal Purple of the Heavenly King, who hath freely lov'd and choſen them. Conſider now, my Son, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and return to me with thy whole Heart; neither deſpiſe thou ſo great and ineffable Riches, which in a State of Grace belongs to thee. Hearken not to the Counſels of Men, that would divert thee from my moſt Bleſſed Light; but follow the Advice of thoſe, who have lov'd and ſought after me. The World knows not the value of my Grace, who ſell me for a ſmall morſel of Bread, which cannot ſatisfy their Appetite. Open the Eyes of thy Mind, and behold,

behold, as far as Human Frailty will permit, the moſt Beautiful Form of God. Thou wilt quickly ſee, that one Grain of my Divine Grace, is more precious than the Empire of the whole World, thô it ſhould laſt for ever. This is my moſt holy and chaſte Inſtruction, which ſhould move thy Heart to deſpiſe all the Comforts of this Earth, and to ſeek after my Friendſhip. If thou wilt be faithful and hearken unto me, I will give thee the new Robe, wherewith many Kings are clad, who ſhall reign with me for ever.

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## CHAP. XVIII.

### *Of reſtoring the Divine Friendſhip by Repentance.*

MY Friendſhip is an unvaluable Treaſure, my deareſt Son, whom I invite to Reconciliation, and

and a Peace more desirable than all things in the World. Consider what I can do, how faithful a Friend I am, and how constantly I maintain the Rights of Friendship. I am rich in Mercy towards all that turn unto me, neither am I pleased with any thing that is Cruel. I am the Lord of Heaven, and of all things contain'd within the compass of Heaven, and of my Dominion there is no end. I founded the Earth that it should not be mov'd for ever, and stretch'd out the Heavens like a Curtain: I created the Sun and the Stars, I appointed Summer and Spring. *All the wild Beasts in the Forest are mine, and so are the Cattel upon a thousand Hills:* I know all the Fowls of the Air as their true Lord, and the beauty of the Fields is from me. All things are mine, neither is there any thing that is Good, which is not subject unto my Empire; and therefore, my belov'd Son; if thou turn to me with

with thy whole Heart, I will faithfully observe the Law of Friendship, and thou shalt be Lord of all things; for among Friends, all things are common. Do not wonder, my Son, that I promise thee such strange things; for if I gave my self for thee, and deliver'd up my beloved Soul into the Hands of Enemies for thy Salvation, what wonder is it, if I give thee some kind of Dominion over my Creatures, which are not worthy to be compar'd with my Soul or Life? Believe me, my Son, that to serve me, is to Reign; for every one that doth the Will of my Father, as I have done, is made Partaker of his Only-begotten Son, so as to become the Son of God by Grace, as I am by Nature. *And if he be made a Son, then he is an Heir of God*: For he has all that the Heirs of a true Lord have, and his Will is done in the whole World, as the Will of a King is done in his Kingdom; because being made the

Friend

Friend of God, he does in all things conform his Will to the moſt righteous Will of his Creator. Seeing therefore theſe things are ſo, my Son, why doſt thou not haſten to return to thy Friend, whoſe Anger all the Rich Men of the World deprecate? How comes it to paſs that thou chooſeſt rather to ſerve the World with a very hard Bondage, than to reign over them by the union of my Friendſhip, whereby not only all my Goods are common to thee, but I my ſelf am moſt truly thine? Am not I better to thee, than all the Friendſhips and Kindreds thou deſireſt? Conſider what thou doſt, my deareſt Friend, and let thy Soul cleave to me. And tho the ſweetneſs thou feeleſt in the Communication of thy Friends which allure thee to Death, be ſo pleaſant to thee; yet delay not any longer to leave thy Carnal Friends for my ſake. For I do not only communicate to true Penitents all my other good

Things, but also my sweetest Consolations, to which no Comforts of this World are comparable. *Open thy Mouth wide, my Son, and I will fill it.* If thou returnest to me, I will honour thee, enrich thee, and comfort thee, as a most loving Mother comforts her Only-begotten Son.

## CHAP. XIX.

*Of the Joy of a good Conscience which arises from Repentance.*

INcomparable is the Joy, my dearest Son, which proceeds from true Repentance, as all my faithful Friends know very well; who seeing themselves translated from Death to Life, from the guilt of Eternal Flames to the right of an Eternal Inheritance, from the bondage of *Pharaoh*, to the City of *Jerusalem*, which I have lov'd, are never

ver cloy'd with the Hymns and ſpiritual Songs, whereby they ſing forth my ſweeteſt Mercies, and their own dear Redemption. As the Body, when it recovers of a Diſeaſe is very glad, becauſe it is deliver'd from ill-humors, and from the danger of Death; ſo alſo the Soul when it is juſtify'd by Repentance, is cheer'd with intimate Joy, becauſe it is deliver'd from its Sins, which are the worſt kind of Humors, and from imminent Eternal Death. But if thou deſireſt to know, my Son, what kind of Joy this is, I muſt tell thee, That it is ſuch a Joy as is ineffable, and unaccountable by Human Knowledge and Eloquence, to all thoſe who never taſted of it, altho they have abandon'd themſelves to the vain Joys of this World. For the Joy of this World dwells only in the ſurface of a Man, who ſeeketh tranſitory good things: But the Joy of a good Conſcience, which proceeds

from Repentance and my Reconciliation, is an intimate Joy which penetrates the very Bones and Marrow with ineſtimable Conſolation. For the Heart of a Juſt Man, after it has forſaken all vicious Courſes, and with a ſtrong Reſolution is converted to me, is expanded and moved by the motions of my Holy Spirit, to lay hold of the Hope of future Happineſs, which is as the anchor of the Soul, firmly truſting, that it ſhall at laſt attain my Infinite Joys. I ſpeak to the Heart of a juſt Man by my ſecret Diſcourſes, which none of the Princes of this World hath known, and in great Love I tell him: *Rejoyce, my ſweeteſt Son, and caſt thy Thoughts upon me; I will nouriſh thee, and lead thee thrô the right Paths of my Righteouſneſs. I will be a Father to thee, and thou ſhalt be my deareſt Son; and I will give thee an Inheritance, which all the Kingdoms of the World are not worthy to be compar'd unto.*

Be

*Be thou faithful unto Death, and thou ſhalt receive the Crown of Life, in the Streets of my* New Jeruſalem *above, where I have placed my Pleaſures. Faint not in Tribulation, for I am with thee to deliver thee, and to advance thee, after the Labours of this mortal Life, far above the higheſt Earth, where thou mayſt eat the Fruits of my moſt pleaſant Paradiſe.* Theſe, and ſuch like words, I ſpeak to the Heart of a juſt Man, who deteſting the Joys of this World, returns like a Hart that is wounded by the Hunters, to me the Living Fountain, and his true Comfort. If then, the joy of a good Conſcience be ſo great, whereby I inſtil into thee my moſt pleaſant Diſcourſes, why does it ſeem hard to thee, my Son, to turn unto me? Why doſt thou not conſider, my Son, the great Good thou wanteſt, whilſt thou wants my Grace and Friendſhip? How long wilt thou make thy Heart heavy, as the *Egyp-*

*tian* did, who refus'd to be converted by my many Inſpirations, and the greatneſs of my Signs and Wonders? Return now, my Son, from the way, wherein thou haſt gone aſtray like a Sheep that is loſt, and call with many ſighs upon thy Shepherd; and I being very deſirous of doing good and ſhowing pity, will hear thee, and lead thee into the fruitful places of my internal Conſolation; where thou wilt meet with ſo great plenty, that thy Heart ſhall wonder and be enlarged, and thou knowing the greatneſs of the Pleaſure, ſhall perſevere in thy Converſion, and in my moſt precious Grace.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XX.

*Of the Consideration of God's Patience waiting long for the Repentance of a Sinner.*

MAny and wonderful are my Benefits, my dearest Son, which should move thee to Repentance, and kindle in thee internal Flames. Consider at least one of them, which is a daily Argument of my infinite Goodness and Mercy; I sustain thee, and give thee Life and Breath, and all the good Things thou hast, for every good Gift comes down from me. I send thee many Inspirations, as my Messengers to invite thee to Peace, and such a Life as is most desirable: I move thy inward parts with the impulses of my Spirit, even while thou sinnest, and transgressest my righteous Law. I preserve thee when thou sins, from greater Evils, and chiefly from the

extreme evil of eternal Puniſhment, which thou deſerves. How then canſt thou reſiſt ſo great kindneſs? Why does not my infinite Mildneſs move thy ſtony Heart? Doſt thou not know that my Patience leads thee to Repentance: *Why then according to thy hardneſs and impenitent heart doſt thou treaſure up to thy ſelf Wrath, againſt the day of Wrath, and revelation of my righteous Judgments?* By my ſecret Inſtruction which touches thy cruel heart, I endeavour to make thee gentle, and thou by thy inward hatdneſs reſiſts my merciful Deſign. I ſtand at the door and knock, deſiring to dwell in the Bed-chamber of thy Soul which I have redeem'd; and thou ſtoppeſt thine ears, that thou mayſt not hear my knocking, as if I were ſome Thief, who were come to ſteal away the goods of thy Houſe. This Ingratitude, my Son, is very miſchievous, which will make any one that hears of it

to tremble. For who did ever hear of ſuch horrible things as thy Soul has done? Who will believe that I thy God, Redeemer, and thy Friend, ſhould be ſo ſolicitous for thy Salvation, as if I minded nothing elſe in the Government of the World, and that thou on the contrary ſhould be ſuch a hard-hearted Infidel, that thou ſeems to mind nothing, but how to reſiſt my Divine Love? Ceaſe therefore now, my Son, from this Folly whereby thou multiplies thy Sins without end, and learn that Gratitude and Fidelity which thou oweſt to thy moſt faithful Lord and Keeper. I have long waited for thee while thou haſt oppos'd me, and preferr'd thy earthly deſires to my Heavenly Love. Turn now therefore with thy whole Heart, and ſeek after me, that thou mayſt ſave thy Soul from thy innumerable Enemies. The time is ſhort, do not ſuffer thoſe few days to paſs away, which I have allotted thee to *Oc-*

*cupy till I come*, that by good trafficking, thou mayst obtain the eternal Riches of my Kingdom. If thou obeyest my Admonitions, and Invitations, I will be very liberal and merciful; and whatever thou hast lost in so many days, wherein thou hast offended me, I will repair by my superabundant Grace and Liberality. Let this, my dearest Son, be thy Wisdom, let this be thy Prudence; take heed thou do not too perversely provoke me to Wrath, and abuse my infinite Patience, as too many Fools have done, who are now tormented in Hell-fire. Follow the advice of my Sons *who tremble at my Word*, and by the gentleness of their Heart prevent my Anger, and I will pour out upon thee a large shower of my Mercy, and fill thy wearied heart with most sweet Consolation.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXI.

*The Consideration of the common Benefits of God, which should move Sinners to Repentance.*

THY Heart, my Son, is too hard; and it is very strange, that notwithstanding thou receivest Day and Night many new Benefits from me, and art preserved from very many Evils by my good Hand of Providence upon thee, yet still thou fallest into so great and enormous Transgressions of my Law. The Heavens are astonish'd at thy Blindness and Ingratitude, which is most unworthy in a Christian: For, not to mention the Natural good things which thou canst not enjoy without me, certainly the Supernatural Benefits thou hast receiv'd from me, whereby thou believest the Catholick Faith, should at least move thee as much as the Common

Benefits

Benefits move the Wild Beasts. For it is very wonderful that Bears and Lions grow tame by the Kindness of their Benefactors, and obey them like young Puppies brought up for pleasure; and yet thou who hast the use of Reason, and art enlightned by Divine Revelation, will not yield to thy greatest Benefactor, and be converted unto me. Wilt thou not consider, what I have done for thee, (like a Husband-man labouring in a Barren ground, which brought forth nothing but Briars and Thorns) to overcome thy fierceness? Whither flyest thou, O Son of *Adam*, whither flyest thou from a most Merciful God and Saviour, and thy Keeper? I wish thou would at least seek after my Face, as Dogs desire to see the Face of their Master, from whom they receive a little Bread. Nay, I demand less from thee, my Son, if perhaps thy Heart may be mov'd by this condescension; for Dogs, after they have

receiv'd many Blows and Wounds, do not resist their Masters, but are afraid of them, and if it be possible, withdraw from them, until their Anger be appeas'd; and as soon as they see the Countenance of their Master cheerful, they leap for joy and play before them, hoping to receive a little morsel of Bread. But thou, my Son, art so untractable, that thou art not only angry with me if I exercise thee with Labour and Affliction, but also rebellest against me, when with a bountiful Heart and a glad Countenance I bestow upon thee great Benefits. What is the meaning of this? How strangely Perverse and Ungrateful wilt thou be, if thou wilt persevere in a state of Damnation, and continue not only an Enemy to me, but to thy own Soul? Cease, my dearest Son, from this thy Madness, and be heartily thankful for my Goodness and Mercy, which would soften even the hardest Rocks: And considering

considering that thou hast lost all, and cannot so much as breath without my Infinite Power and Bounty, say to thy self; *I have gone into a far Country, I have lost all, because I have offended my most Gracious Lord, God, Redeemer, and my Father: I will now return to his House, and with Tears in my Eyes I will prostrate my self before him, that he may cloath me being naked, enlighten me being blind, instruct me being ignorant, and feed me being hungry, and relieve a most wretched Creature, which has madly departed from him.* If thou dost these things, my dearest Son, I will meet thee as thou comest sighing to me, *I will create in thee a clean Heart, and renew a right Spirit within thee,* Psal. 50. And I will build thee a faithful House, without paying Tribute, in my Holy City, that thou mayst rejoyce for ever, with the most Noble Citizens, and with my most Valiant Conquerors, who have come

out

out of great Tribulation, and have waſhed their Garments in the moſt pure Blood of the Lamb of God. Think of theſe things, my Son, and think of them again and again, and let thy Heart be mov'd to Repentance, when thou ſings forth and commemorates with hearty Gratitude my innumerable Benefits conferr'd upon thee.

## CHAP. XXII.

### *Of the conſideration of the Myſtery of the Incarnation.*

MY deareſt Son, who haſt left me, I would have thee to contend with me in Judgment, if perhaps the favours I have beſtow'd upon thee, are not ſufficient to ſoften the hardeſt Stones. I paſs over thoſe Good things proceeding from natural Cauſes, which ſhould ſtrongly move thy Heart to ſeek after my Friend-

Friendſhip: I will rather now invite thee to conſider and review my ſupernatural Benefits, which are ſo admirable, that they can never be ſufficiently valued. For the whole Earth lay in Darkneſs and the ſhadow of Death, becauſe there was none that laid it to heart: But the Lord did a ſhort work upon Earth, when the *Word was made Fleſh* for thee, and I lay in the Womb of a moſt pure Virgin my Mother, like a Spouſe in his Bed-chamber. Then the Majeſty of the Higheſt was cloathed with the Veil of Human Fleſh, and I the Only-begotten Son of God put on Human Nature, that thou, my deareſt Son, might be exalted to the Divine, and might ſit with me at my Table in my Kingdom. If thou kneweſt, what thoughts I had of thee, whilſt I was yet hid in the Womb of my Mother, thou would eaſily perceive how ungrateful thou art, when thou ſinneſt againſt the moſt High God,

and

and thy moſt dear Brother; for ſince I aſſum'd Human Fleſh for thy Salvation, I was not only thy God and Lord, but alſo thy moſt loving Brother, which ſhould greatly move thee. For who among Men or Angels could think, that my ſublime Majeſty ſhould deſcend to converſe with Men, who had departed from me. This is a great ſecret, it is hid from the Fowls of the Air. But ſince, my Son, thou art aſſur'd by Faith, which is *the evidence of things not ſeen*, that I came from the Boſom of the Father to aſſume the Human Nature, not for the works of Righteouſneſs which thou hadſt done, but according to the greatneſs of my Mercy; Make ſuch uſe of this right Faith, that thou may be converted to me with thy whole heart, who lov'd thy Salvation from all Eternity, and out of the bowels of my Mercy am come from on high to viſit thee. Say to thy ſelf, my Son, when thou think-

thinkest of the great Mystery of my Incarnation. *How can I resist the inestimable Love of my sweetest God? How can I choose but melt into tears of hearty Contrition out of love to him, when I consider the height and depth of the Divine Counsel in assuming my Flesh, whereby God became not only my Keeper, and Supporter, but also my most dear Brother? O miserable wretch, what am I a doing! How can I ly one hour longer in the filth of Sin, and render so great Evil for such an inestimable Good, as my most gracious God has done for me? I wish my heart might burst asunder by the greatness of my Contrition, arising from the multitude and heinousness of my Sins, whereby I have deserved his Wrath.* These and such-like things, my Son, thou should'st meditate upon, to turn thy Soul from thy Iniquity, that thou may'st make some suitable return for my Infinite Love, which I have shown by the communication of my

immense

immenſe Goodneſs, in being made a Man like unto thee. Offer unto me a thouſand Burnt-offerings upon the Altar of thy Heart, prick'd and humbled for thy Sins, and let the incentive of ſo great a Love excite thee to return to my Grace and Friendſhip. And I, as thy moſt loving Brother, will receive thee coming from a far Country, and introduce thee into the Houſe of the Moſt High, my Father: Who perceiving thee to be my Brother, who hath forſaken thy evil ways, will make thee partaker of that incorruptible Inheritance, which is reſerv'd in the Heavens for thoſe, who by true Repentance from the bottom of their Hearts, ſeek after the Eternal Conſolations of my Paradiſe.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXIII.

### *Of the Consideration of the Mystery of Christ's Nativity.*

I, The Only-begotten Son of God, my dearest Son, being the First-begotten of my Father before all Worlds, by a wonderful Mystery was born into this World, and came out of the Womb of my most pure Mother, that I might converse with thee, and shew thee an Example which should tame all the wild Beasts of the World. For what kind of Love doth it seem to thee, that the Most High God, whom the Morning-stars do praise, and to whom all the Creatures are subject, should be shortned to the Span of an Infant's Body, and come forth of the Womb of a Virgin, to suffer from that Hour the Miseries of Human Nature for thee? Who could ever think of so great a Humiliation,

on, whereby I emptied my ſelf, and being in the Form of God, I took upon me the Form of a Servant, and was born in the City of *Bethlehem*, where I abundantly paid the things I had not taken, and began to ſuffer for thy Soul, which was moſt dear to me. Is it not wonderful, that he whom the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain, ſhould be laid in a little Manger, becauſe there was no room for him in the Inn? What Communication is there between the Divine Majeſty and ſuch unheard-of Poverty, as I ſuffer'd, who am rich in Mercy? Conſider, my Son, theſe wonderful things, which were not done without deſign, but were manag'd by Eternal Wiſdom for thy Salvation, Inſtruction and Comfort; and ſee how ill thou haſt uſed ſuch ineffable Goodneſs, and my ſweet Kindneſs. I came into the World for this very end, that I might be born in thy Heart, and might receive for a reward of

that

that Poverty I felt in the Stable
the delightful Inn of thy Soul t
dwell in. And yet thou wast so a
verse to me, that thou wouldst no
allow me the desired Habitation o
thy House. Nettles and Thorn
grew up in thee, and a generation
of Vipers found a place in thy Heart
and I alone am rejected, lest
should be born anew in thy Soul.
O Fool and slow of heart to believe
and to seek after thy true and only
Good! When will thy Eyes b
open'd that thou mayst know an
love me, and admit me into the se
cret Chambers of thy Heart? Tur
at last, my Son, unto me, that so by
the Regeneration of thy Repentance
I may be born again in thy Soul.
Commune with thine own Heart
and say; *If the Son of the most high*
*God was therefore born into the*
*World, and made a Citizen of an*
*Earthly City, that I might be re*
*new'd and born again in him, and*
*be made a Citizen of the* New Jeru
salem

*salem above, which triumphs in Heaven; How can I any longer be still in a state of Sin, and resist his infinite Blessings and Compassions? Why do not I seek to be Reform'd after the likeness of my Pattern, which is the most desirable thing in Heaven or on Earth? What a hardness is this, that the most high God should be made an Infant, suffer Cold and extreme Poverty for me, and that I should pursue the advantages of this World, as if my Happiness consisted in earthly Substance? Behold* to us a Son is given, *who being* the Prince of Peace, carries the Government upon his own Shoulder, *that he may not burden his Subjects, but bear their griefs: And I the most ungrateful among his People, do not consider what he has done for me, as if I could find out Happiness without him! Wo's me, how foolishly have I acted! I will return to my Prince, to whom the eternal* Father *hath given the Throne of* David *his Father, and I*

*will*

*will suffer with him, that I may not be excluded from the house of Jacob, in which he will reign for ever.* If thou thinkest of these things, my Son, and being sorry for thy past Life, returnest to me, I will beget thee again, until I be form'd in thee, my dearly beloved Companion and my Friend: And so my most Merciful Father will love thee, who *hath Predestinated whom he hath foreknown, that they might be conform'd to the Image of his Son, that I might be the First-born among many* dear *Brethren*, who have sought after me and lov'd me.

## CHAP. XXIV.

*Of the Consideration of the Mysterie of Circumcision.*

COnsider, my Son, how hard it is for thee to kick against the pricks of my Infinite Love; The

Works that I have done for thee, are pricks, which if thou reſiſts thou ſhalt be wounded; and I ſhall be juſtified in my ſayings, and overcome when I ſhall Judge thee. For who is ſo blind and mad, that he does not ſee thy Heart to be harder than the Stones, ſince thou art not mov'd to Contrition by the knowledge of the ſweet Myſteries of my Infancy? I endured Poverty, and other Hardſhips from my Infancy for thy Salvation. For I was not only born in a poor and forlorn State; but after a few Days, I ſhed for thee my moſt precious Blood, being Circumciſed in the Fleſh, that thou might'ſt Circumciſe thy Heart, and being mov'd with the firſt appearance of my Redemption, might love me with all thy ſtrength. 'Tis wonderful that I ſhould make ſuch haſte to diſcharge the Office of a Redeemer, for the Salvation, Comfort and Inſtruction of Mankind, and yet thou ſhould haſten ſo much

to abuſe my Blood, and to ſell thy own Soul for nothing! Does it not ſeem juſt and equal to thee to abandon the multitude of thy Sins and the filthineſs of thy Life, and that thou ſhouldſt at leaſt offer to me thy Youth, ſince I have offer'd to thee my Infancy, that I might do the Work of thy Redemption? I have run after thee, while thou haſt greedily purſu'd thy abominable Vices, and for many Years paſt thou wilt not return to me, and circumciſe the Fore-skin of thy Heart. Wo to thee, my Son, how blind art thou, and how fooliſhly doſt thou act in deſpiſing thy own Soul, and hardning thy Neck againſt my moſt powerful Love! So did not my faithful Friends, when they held their Swords upon their Thigh, that after my Example they might Circumciſe their Hearts, and cut off whatever they felt diſagreeable to my Law. Thus thou haſt heard, my Son, of many

Thou-

Thouſands of young Men, and of Maids very lovely in the Eyes of the World, who were inflam'd with ſo great a deſire of me, that they us'd this World very ſparingly, leſt perhaps they ſhould be deliver'd to a reprobate ſenſe, and periſh from the Way of Life. What then art thou doing, O my Son? Whither doſt thou run without reſtraint of my Fear? Why doſt thou not look ſtreight upon me, and turn thy back upon the Tabernacles of the Wicked, that thou may'ſt firmly adhere to thy moſt Faithful Redeemer? I ſpoke openly to the World, ſaying; *If thine Eye offend thee, pluck it out and caſt it from thee*, Matth. 5. 29. And the ſame I ſaid of the Hand and the Foot, that I might inſtruct the Sons of *Adam* in the School of Wiſdom which is from Heaven. For all things that give offence, muſt be cut off and caſt away, leſt they burden the Soul, when it is aſcending into Heaven. What Folly then

is it, my Son, to deliver thy ſelf up to vicious Courſes of innumerable Luſts; ſo that thy Conſcience bears witneſs againſt thee, That thou liveſt like a Heathen, and treadeſt under foot my ſpotleſs Law. Thou haſt play'd the Madman, my Son, too long in roving thrô the Fields of the World, without ever remembring me. Return now at leaſt to me, and caſt out of thy Heart all the Idols which thou haſt ador'd. Do not abhor the Doctrine of the Croſs, which thô it ſeem *fooliſhneſs to them that periſh, yet to them who are ſaved, it is the Power and Wiſdom of God*, 1 Cor. 1 8. 24. *Take the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God*, and that Word which *is quick and powerful, and ſharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of Soul and Spirit.* Hitherto thou haſt liv'd among Carnal Men, who know not the things of the Spirit: 'Tis high time now that

that thou ſhouldſt turn to the Spiritual Law, whereby that which is Carnal and Earthy is cut off, (and that which is Spiritual lives) not with *the Circumciſion made with Hands*, but by the Operations of my Grace, which *puts off the Old* Adam, *and puts on the New Man, that after God is created in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs*, Epheſ. 4. 24. If thou doſt theſe things, my deareſt Son, I will take from thee the *Heart of Stone*, and by a wonderful Converſion I will give thee *a Heart of Fleſh*, upon which my Beautiful Image ſhall be imprinted.

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## CHAP. XXV.

### *Of the Conſideration of the Converſation of Chriſt before his Paſſion.*

IF thou wouldſt conſider, my Son, as thou ſhouldſt, that ſpace of Time wherein I liv'd from my Child-

hood unto my Paſſion amongſt the mortal Sons of *Adam*, thou wouldſt not be ſo hard-hearted and ungrateful againſt my Divine Goodneſs and Mercy. The Evangeliſts indeed have written a few things concerning my Converſation in that time of Silence; but there is none among my faithful enlightned Servants, who does not believe and think that there were ſeveral great Myſteries conceal'd at that time, which I can ſometimes diſcover to my deareſt Friends, when they inwardly ſigh and breath after me. And thô thou ſeemeſt unwilling to be reckon'd among my dear Friends, ſince thou followeſt after ſtrange Gods according to thy own Heart's luſts; yet for my own ſake, and for thy Salvation alſo, I ſend thee ſeveral Inſpirations, that thou mayſt remember me, and conſider my Mildneſs and Humility, which appears in my ſilence of Thirty Years, that I kept for thy ſake. Tell me, O Son, what

what thinkeſt thou of the Son of the Moſt High, who convers'd ſo many Years upon Earth, and courted nothing that was worldly, but liv'd among Sinners; and yet all this while conceal'd his Infinite Greatneſs? What ſayeſt thou of the Majeſty of the Only-begotten Son of God, who was obedient to a poor Carpenter, his reputed Father? What thinkeſt thou of the mean Clothes, the ſpare-Dyet, and the ordinary Houſe, in which the Sublime Creator of the World dwelt with his poor Creatures? Why doſt thou not meditate upon the Silence of the *Word of God*, who did not diſcover himſelf for ſo many years, but conceal'd all that time his profound Wiſdom? Thinkeſt thou, that I could not have come in Majeſty with many Armies of Angels and Men to ſerve me, as the greateſt of Kings? Certainly, I might have done ſo, my Son; but *the Son of Man came not to be miniſtred*

*niſtred unto, but to miniſter, and to give his* moſt precious *Life a ranſom for* thee; ſo that his Converſation was indeed a School of Inſtruction to thee. Now it is very ſtrange, that when I have done ſo much good, and ſuffer'd ſo much evil for thee, thou ſhould be ſo hard-hearted, as not to be ſoftned unto Repentance. Wo to thee, my Son, how vaſtly art thou different from thy Pattern! I have choſen the greateſt Poverty, and thou ſeekeſt after immenſe Riches. I choſe an humble Station, thou ſeekeſt to appear higher than others. I choſe Silence, thou delighteſt in much Talking. I was ſubject to my Mother, and my reputed Father, thou hateſt Obedience to the Superiors whom I have ſet over thee. I gave my ſelf to Prayer Night and Day; thou can ſcarce allow thy ſelf half an Hour to think of the Eternal Salvation of thy Soul. What is the meaning of this? How long wilt

thou

thou fly from me thy Maſter and Keeper? O my Son, do no longer play the Fool and loſe thy own Soul, for which I have laboured hard in a deſert and unpaſſable Land, where Charity cannot dwell, but be thou converted to me, in whom thou haſt Redemption and Remiſſion of Sins, and the hope of an Inheritance which is reſerv'd for all true Penitents in the Heavens. Break off now the occaſions of Sin, by which thou haſt been bound, and aſpire after the Liberty of the Sons of God, which is worthy of the price of my Blood. Fear not me as a hard Maſter, becauſe thou haſt ſinned, and thy Conſcience tells thee, that thou deſerveſt Puniſhment; for I will ſpare thee, and as ſoon as thou breatheſt after me, I will no more remember all thine Iniquities. Come quickly, my dearest Son, make haſte to be reconcil'd unto me, and I ſhall be delighted with the fruit of thy mild Converſation.

ſation, and I will teach thee in ſecret my moſt pleaſant Diſcipline, whereby thou ſhalt partake of my tender Compaſſions.

## CHAP. XXVI.

### *Of the Conſideration of the Preaching of Chriſt.*

THou acteſt very fooliſhly, my Son, when thou ſeekeſt after Teachers, having itching Ears, who Propheſy according to thy pleaſure, and turn thee away from hearing my Truth, which delights chaſte Hearts. Certainly *my word is a* burning and ſhining *Lamp*; as my Servant *David* obſerves, *Pſ.* 119. 105. who lov'd it with all his Heart. I have preach'd the Truth unto the World, neither have I ſpar'd my Labour and Sweat, that I might Inſtruct the Princes of the Earth, and teach the Old Men Underſtanding.

I

I publickly appear'd to thoſe who did not ask for me, and have declared to them Eternal Life, that the deſert Places of the Earth might be made fat, and the barren Fields be fill'd with plenty. I have cry'd aloud from a ſenſe and deſire of thy Salvation, and counſell'd thee to buy of me the burning Gold of my Love, that thou mighteſt be enrich'd above all the Men in the Eaſt; and yet the Fables and Lies of Sinners do more pleaſe thee than the true and lively Diſcourſes of thy Redeemer. O ungrateful and fooliſh Son of *Adam*, why doſt thou not open the Ears of thy Heart to my moſt ſweet efficacious words? Call to mind how I cry'd on the great day of the Feaſt, *If any man thirſt, let him come to me and drink*, John 7. 37. and becauſe thy thirſt does vex thee, drink and refreſh thyſelf, that ſo there may ariſe in thee a Fountain of Living Water ſpringing up unto Eternal Life. Remember, my Son, what I

did

did in the Hearts of my Hearers, who felt the power of my Preaching, and be thou instructed and become like unto them. Many of them said, *Never man spake like this Man*, John 7. 46. for they felt the force of Truth, and the Voice of the Lord, which breaks the proud Cedars, and comforts the humble Hearts. But thou, my Son, seems to be of another mind, like those who said, *This is a hard saying*, John 6. 60. for if it were not so, thou wouldst not run so fast to the comforts of this World, and grow weary of my School. But let the time past suffice, to have stopt thy Ears against my Words, lest they should pierce thy cruel Heart; humble thy self now, and be converted to the Director of thy Life, by whose most sweet Words the Stones are mov'd. I who publickly taught, whilst I was amongst Men, will preach to the Ears of thy Heart, and declare the good Ty-

dings

dings of Remiſſion of Sins, and of that moſt ſtedfaſt Hope, which enters within the Veil, wherewith my Divinity is veil'd. And I will give thee a wiſe and underſtanding Heart, if thou reſt ſatisfy'd with my Diſcourſes, which thou ſhalt receive in ſtill and ſoft whiſpers, when thou being far remov'd from the occaſions and buſineſs of the World ſhall cry unto me. Be faithful therefore, my Son, and open the gate of thy Heart, receive and keep in it my chaſte Doctrine, as a Treaſure of incomparable Price, for which all earthly ſubſtance may be juſtly ſold. Shake off the duſt wherewith thou art blinded, my Son, ariſe out of the Dirt and Clay in which thou now lies: Ariſe from the death of Sin at my moſt powerful Voice, whereby I have call'd thee, as I did *Lazarus*, out of the Grave. This is the Leſſon of Eternal Life, and thoſe who have follow'd it have gather'd the moſt ſweet fruits of my Preaching.

ing. This is the Inſtruction which I have ſet apart for the Inheritance of my Friends, who with purified Ears hear me, and being convinc'd by the force of Truth, have faithfully obſerv'd my Commandments. This is the learning of the ſtout in *Iſrael*, who with the Sword of my Word have cut off all carnal and worldly Deſires, and with their whole heart have adher'd to me, the only Good and their only Comfort. Think of theſe things, my Son, and return to me from the way wherein thou haſt gone aſtray; and I will feed thee with pure Milk, and with the Honey of my ſweeteſt Word.

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## CHAP. XXVII.

### *Of the Conſideration of our Redemption.*

HE that attentively conſiders the Myſtery of that Redemption

ption which is in my Blood, O my deareſt Son, will eaſily be prick'd at the Heart, mov'd to a hearty Repentance of his Sins, and to waſh his Garment, and make it white in the Blood of that Immaculate Lamb, which was ſlain for Sinners. For it was a thing very Wonderful, and of great Efficacy to convert the Hearts of Sinners, that the Son of the Moſt High God by an eternal Decree, ſhould deſcend to ſeek a loſt Sinner, in Hunger and Thirſt, Heat and Cold, by enduring Pains and Perſecutions, Reproaches and a moſt bitter Death. For who did ever hear of ſuch things, that the Only-begotten of the eternal Father, ſhould be delivered up to Death for a vile and ungrateful Slave, who had tranſgreſs'd the pure Law of his Teſtament? Certainly in this my Father commended his ineſtimable Love and Goodneſs, that when thou waſt yet a Sinner, my deareſt Son, he freely deliver'd

deliver'd up his moſt beloved Son for thee, that he might tye thy Soul to him by the bond of my Love. I appear'd amongſt Men as a Stranger, and a wayfaring Man, that ſhun'd to abide with them, having conceal'd my Divine Majeſty, that I might finiſh the Work of thy Redemption, by giving my ſelf for thee. My Angels wondred very much knowing my infinite Majeſty, and were aſtoniſh'd that I ſhould deſcend to the troubles of this Earth, which I had given to the Sons of Men who had forſaken me. I might without the expence of ſo much affliction and deriſion, have ſav'd thy Soul; and yet becauſe I lov'd thee to the end, I would do ſuch things in the midſt of the Earth, as might move the hardeſt Stones. And for this reaſon, my enlightned Servants, when they review the methods of their Redemption, are never ſatisfy'd with offering to me the Sacrifice of Praiſe,

and

and magnifying my Mercies of Old times. For ſince I came out of the Womb of my pure Mother, I have in ineffable ways endeavour'd thy Salvation not ſparing my own moſt precious life. And yet, which is ſtrange and contrary to all the Laws of Gratitude, thou ſelleſt thy Soul for nothing, which I valued ſo highly, that I deliver'd up my Life for it. This blindneſs, my Son, ſeems incredible, whereby thy Heart is blinded and hardned, as if thou wert not anointed with Oyl, and belong'd not to the Royal Prieſthood of my People. How long wilt thou defile thy Soul with the filth of thy Sins, which are multiplied as the ſand of the Sea? Conſider the price wherewith it was bought, and thou wilt ſee what a deteſtable thing it is, for ſuch ſlight cauſes to disfigure it, and with the Sons of *Agar* to fall under the hard bondage of Sin, of Death and Hell, whither thou art haſting with all ſpeed.

ſpeed. Stop a little, my Son, and run not ſo ſwiftly to Perdition; ſtop a little and hear my piercing Words, that thou mayeſt Repent, and be made Partaker of my Redemption. Wilt thou ſin for ever, and never ceaſe to reſiſt my Divine Inſpirations, which deſcend upon thy Soul like the drops of Dew diſtilling upon the Earth? This is the laſt Hour, and the faſhion of this World paſſeth away, ſooner than thy inordinate Appetite would have it; and therefore all thy unlawful Joys will quickly vaniſh, wherein thou delighteſt contrary to my Law. Turn therefore, my Son, to thy moſt mild Redeemer, and waſh thy ſelf in the Bath of my Blood, that thou may appear in the ſight of my ſweet Spouſe *Jeruſalem*, more beautiful than all the Boys who drink in the Cups of the King of *Babylon*, and I will write thy Name among my moſt beloved Friends.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXVIII.

### *Of the Conſideration of the Paſſion of Chriſt in general.*

MY Converſation, dear Son, was wonderful, when by enduring the toil of Human Labour I ſought after thee; but the higheſt Admiration is due to my Paſſion, which ought to move all the Creatures in the Univerſe. I, the Impaſſible God, from the greatneſs of my Love being made a paſſible Man, have endur'd much evil from thoſe to whom I have done very much good, that Men might know *they have an High-Prieſt tempted in all things like unto them, and might be made conformable to their Pattern.* This is the meditation of the Juſt, whoſe Hearts do melt with an intimate Compaſſion for my Pains, and thereby are encourag'd to hold on in the rougheſt Ways they meet

meet with. This is the Prodigy which inflames my faithful Servants, who are aſtoniſh'd to think how the Immortal God ſhould find out this admirable way of ſuffering Death. This is the very great and wide Sea, where my wiſeſt Servants are ſwallow'd up in the abyſs, wondring at the depth of the Divine Counſel, that made choice of this Method of Saving Men, which was never ſufficiently known by the Wiſe and Prudent of the World; but is reveal'd to Babes, that no Fleſh ſhould glory before its Creator. Who would ever have thought, my Son, that I the Lord and Eternal King of the World, whom all the Creatures obey, ſhould ſo far humble and abaſe myſelf, that my own Creatures being provok'd by an Infernal Fury, ſhould lay violent Hands upon me, and gnaſh upon me with their Teeth? How could it ever enter into the Mind of any Man, that in the firſt-born City *Jeruſalem*,

*ruſalem*, the Cauſe of my Death ſhould be Pleaded before the Tribunal of Sinners? Who would ever have ſaid, That the Day ſhould come when the Furious People ſhould cry out againſt their God, and earneſtly demand his Death from whom they receiv'd Life? Surely thy Heart, my Son, muſt be grown harder than the Nether-Mill-ſtone, whilſt thou ſtill purſues thy worldly Luſts, and art altogether unconcern'd at the Conſideration of my Paſſion. Canſt thou entertain ſuch an averſion to me, whilſt thou heareſt in my Goſpel the Powerful and Piercing Diſcourſes, that were made upon the Hiſtory of my Paſſion and Death, and the Flames kindled by them, which made the Hearts of the Diſciples burn within them? If ſo, then thy Iniquity is much greater than that of the Heathens, to whom the Myſtery of the Paſſion of the Son of God was never reveal'd; for they know not what I have done for them

them. But thou, who believes my pure Oracles, and notwithstanding the checks of thy Conscience, flyest from me, hast no excuse for thy intolerable Ingratitude. Return therefore, my Son, to me, who have suffer'd for the Eternal Salvation of thy Soul, and let it not be grievous to thee, to be made partaker of my Pains and Death, by a true Conversion, and a suitable Repentance of thy Sins, that so thou mayst be made partaker of my Resurrection and Immortality. Remember the Citizens of *Jerusalem*, how unmindful they were of my Benefits, when they rose up against me, and hunted after my Life, like Lions greedy of their Prey; And so thou wilt have a representation of the Son of God Suffering and Dying for thee, and buying thy most desirable Liberty with a great Price. Thus thy Heart will be mov'd with the sight of my Pains and Disgrace, by which thou knowest thy self to be

be Redeem'd. If thou ſhalt do theſe things ſincerely, and by changing thy Mind, ſhall be Converted unto me, I will accept the Sacrifice of thy Heart, and will love thee as my moſt faithful Servant and my Friend.

## CHAP. XXIX.

### *Of the Conſideration of the cauſe of Chriſt's Paſſion.*

I Heartily wiſh, my Son, that thou wouldeſt conſider the cauſe of my moſt bitter Paſſion, that ſo by the conſideration of my exceeding great Love to thee, thou may be prevail'd upon to forſake thy ſinful courſes which are deſtructive to thy precious Soul. For it was not for thy merits, nor at thy requeſt, but upon the mere motion of my infinite Goodneſs, that I always lov'd thee; and therefore I endeavour to

to draw thee after me, that I may have pity upon thee, and cure the mortal wound of thy Sins. I Decreed from all Eternity to come and visit thee, while I was yet in the bosom of my Father, and I emptied my self and took upon me the form of a Servant, that I might exalt thee to the form of God, and make thee partaker of my Inheritance. This is the cause of my Passion which should greatly move thee to Repentance, and Admiration of my inestimable Love. But thou, my Son, values little this eternal Love, but dealest so unfaithfully by me as if I had always been thy enemy. 'Tis strange how thy Heart can bear the mighty force of my unspeakable Mercy, without some Sense of Contrition: which shows that thy Heart is very perverse, and obstinately resolv'd to resist my Inspirations, wherewith I seek to enlighten thee. But if my eternal Love does not move thee, consider at

least

leaſt, what cauſe Men had to procure the Paſſion and Death I ſuffer'd for thee, and thou wilt ſee the greatneſs of my Love. For certain if thou hadſt ask'd the Phariſees and my other Enemies, why they conſpir'd together againſt my Innocence, and remov'd me out of the Land of the Living, they would have anſwer'd what they ſaid in their Council; *What do we, for this man doth many Miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him*, John 11. 47, 48. Behold, my Son, the cauſe which my Enemies found out for my Crucifixion. I did them many good Works, I heal'd their Sick, I cleans'd their Lepers, I rais'd their Dead to Life, and with my infinite Meekneſs I endur'd their hatred; and yet they thought it expedient to remove me out of the Earth, for the Signs which I wrought in the midſt of them. *Many Oxen have compaſs'd me about, and fat bulls have beſet me*

*round*, Pſal. 22. 12. See then, my Son, to how great Miſery I ſubmitted for thy Salvation, by ſuffering greater Evils from thoſe upon whom I beſtow'd greater Good. But if thy Soul be ſo averſe to me, that neither will this Reaſon move thee, conſider at leaſt what was the cauſe of my Paſſion on thy part, and thou wilt find it to be thy grievous Sins, whereby thou haſt provok'd the Wrath of my moſt Merciful Father. And certainly thy hardneſs will appear to be incredible, that thô thou art conſcious to thy ſelf thou haſt not deſerv'd the Mercy I have ſhown thee, but on the contrary haſt deſerv'd my Wrath, which would have turn'd thee into Hell; yet thou perſevereſt ſo many Days in thy Averſion and Enmity to me. How comes it to paſs, my Son, that thou art ſo far blinded, that thou canſt not behold the cleareſt Light, and reſiſteſt the ſtrongeſt force of Truth? How far wilt thou withdraw

draw from thy own Salvation, O wretched Son of *Adam*, and oppoſe the Deſigns of my Goodneſs? Give over, my Son, this Madneſs, for every one that hears of it will be aſtoniſh'd at thy Blindneſs. Thou haſt ſtruggl'd long enough with my Mercy, yield now to me who deſires this Victory, at which all *Jeruſalem*, my Spouſe, and thy moſt loving Mother, will rejoyce. I found no merit in thee, for which I ſhould Redeem thee, but I found thy Sins which I had a reſpect to, out of the greatneſs of my Mercy. Make good uſe therefore of this Bounty, and being infirm, turn to thy moſt Gracious Phyſician; being blind, turn to the pureſt Light of thy Eyes; being a wandring Son, return to thy Father. I will receive thee with open Arms, and deliver thee from the miſerable ſtate of Enmity, and tranſlate thee to the Inheritance of the Sons of God, whoſe Names are written in the Book of Life.

## CHAP. XXX.

### *Of the Conſideration of Apprehending Chriſt.*

VEry wonderful are the Myſteries of my Paſſion, my Son, which if thou would conſider after thy Will is chang'd, thy Soul by my Grace would cleave to me, and would never again depart from me. Thou, for thy many and grievous Sins, whereby thou haſt provok'd my Indignation, haſt deſerv'd to be ſeiz'd by the Infernal Wolves, and being *bound Hand and Foot to be caſt into outer Darkneſs*, which is without me, who dwell in Light inacceſſible; and yet I who am the true Liberty of the Sons of God, was taken and bound for thy Sins after a moſt unworthy manner, which no ways becomes the Majeſty of the Only-begotten Son of God. Where is *the Wiſe Man*, who *will conſider*

*conſider theſe things, that he may underſtand the Loving-kindneſs of the Lord?* I wiſh, my deareſt Son, thou wouldſt at laſt awake out of ſleep, which thou indulgeſt too much in a matter which concerns thy Salvation, that thou might'ſt ſee as from a ſecret place, what I ſuffer'd at my Apprehenſion, that I might purchaſe thy Liberty at a great price! But the blindneſs of thy Mind, which thou haſt contracted by ſinning, will not ſuffer thee to behold with purified Eyes the depth of the Divine Counſel under the Fury of my Enemies, who like hungry Dogs ruſh'd upon me. O how great was the Fury, how Fierce the Minds, how Inſolent the Hearts of thoſe, who run upon the moſt Mild Lamb of God, who came into the Sacerdotal City that he might be Sacrific'd for thee! Can thou ever forget, my Son, that Night, wherein after the ſweat of Blood ſhed for thee, thoſe Cruel Robbers ſeiz'd up-

on me, their much desired Prey, shouting and rejoycing, as the Conquerors do when they divide Spoil! Be not so hard-hearted, my Son, but be mindful of me, and judge how much Love and Gratitude thou owest to my most tender Heart. For so great was the proof of my Mercy and Goodness, which clearly appear'd in that Night, when I was deliver'd into the Hands of Sinners, that thô thou be blind, thou canst not think otherwise, but that thou art harder than a Flint, if thou art not mov'd by my Infinite Patience and Meekness. Dost not thou consider, that *Judas*, my Domestick, whom I lov'd and honour'd with a Place among my Apostles, came to me, being conscious of my humble kind of Life; and I was so far from beating him back, that I answer'd him with such sweet Words as would soften the Rocks. By this I plainly show'd thee the Infinite Love, wherewith I love Sinners,

althô

althô they have blaſphem'd and ſold me. Seeing therefore, my deareſt Son, thou knoweſt I am moſt willing to receive thee, althô thou haſt moſt grievouſly Sinn'd, why doſt thou not relent and turn to me, at leaſt for my Infinite Benignity? How can'ſt thou continue ſo much as one Night, in a ſtate of Enmity with me, and ſtrive againſt the Mildneſs of the Son of God? Give over therefore, my deareſt Friend, this Folly, whereby thou damneſt thy own Soul, and be reconcil'd to me. that I may reckon thee among the Servants, who are *Faithful in all my Houſe*, and are afraid to be parted from their only true Comfort. Turn at length to me thy Redeemer, who was Apprehended for thee by his Fierce Enemies, who endeavour'd to root out the memory of him from the Land of the Living. The time is ſhort, and the Sun declines towards the Weſt: Make haſte therefore before the Night

comes on, which will cover thee with the darkneſs of Death, wherein Sinners ſhall mourn for ever, for the ſhort-liv'd Debauchery and vain Pleaſure of this preſent Life. Suffer me, my Son, to apprehend thee, and bind thee with the Cords of my Love, who was apprehended and bound for thee, and by a ſincere Converſion from the bottom of thy Heart, make haſte to enjoy ſweet Communion with me.

## CHAP. XXXI.

*The Conſideration of Preſenting Chriſt before the Judges.*

MY Cauſe, dear Son, was Judged as the Cauſe of an impious Man, and which is wonderful, the moſt Equal Judge of all the Creatures was Condemn'd by Unjuſt Judges. Thou indeed deſerv'd not only to be ſeverely Judg'd, but to be

be eternally Condemn'd, for thy filthy Abominations, whereby thou haſt tranſgreſſed my undefiled Law; and yet out of my abundant Mercy, I was preſented before the Judges for thee: And hereby thy hardneſs may appear, who lives as if thou hadſt done nothing worthy of Death. And thô it is expected from Day to Day, that thou ſhouldſt Repent, yet it never comes into thy mind, what I endur'd for thy Salvation before the Judges of my City *Jeruſalem*. I am indeed the Son of the Moſt High God, and am not by Robbery, but by Nature, equal to God; and yet I was reputed and accuſed as a Blaſphemer, becauſe I call'd my ſelf the Son of God. I am the Wiſdom of God, whô Created all Things with my Father, and Governs them in Number, Weight and Meaſure; and I was clothed with a white Robe, and derided as a Fool, that I might bring thee back to the Wiſdom of God

which thou had forſaken. I am perfect Candor and divine Innocence, and yet I was treated moſt unworthily as a notorious Sinner. Now what does thy own Conſcience ſay to thee, my Son, when thou reads theſe things, which I moſt meekly endur'd for thy Eternal Salvation? Canſt thou bear with the greatneſs of my Goodneſs, without Repentance and innumerable Tears? What would'ſt thou have thought, if thou hadſt ſeen me drag'd thrô the Royal City, and heard the falſe Accuſations againſt me, and thoſe Robbers earneſtly demanding me, to afflict my very precious Soul? What would thou have done, if thou hadſt ſeen the Knocks and Blows, and the Spittle wherewith the Face of the Son of God was disfigur'd, that ſubmitting to this very low abaſement he might cure thy Pride. O Son of *Adam*, how canſt thou reſiſt the force of my Grace and Merit? Is it not wonderful that at the remembrance

brance of this most faithful History, thy Ice is not dissolv'd, and that the Waters do not flow, proceeding from a Sense of thy great Contrition? I heartily wish, my Son, that this Image were imprinted upon thee, of the most Mild and Modest Son of God, standing before unjust Judges, that thy Heart might be mov'd. *Pilate* himself, tho' a Slave to the World, could not perswade himself that the Charge against me was true; and was very urgent to deliver me from the Jaws of those Wolves, who stood by him ready to devour me. And 'tis strange that an Unbeliever being convinc'd of my Innocence, should publickly give Testimony, That he found in me no cause of Death; whereas thou who believest me to be the true God, and uncapable of any Sin, by multiplying thy Sins dost Crucify me again: And truly, my Son, as much as lies in thee, thou dost again Crucify me, and as it were present me before

before the unbelieving Judges, that I may be put to Death; and yet I bear patiently with all these things, expecting thy Conversion and Repentance, whereby thou may'st be deliver'd from the rigour of my Judgment. Return, my deareſt Son, to thy Friend, from thy Enmity and Wickedneſs, which draws thee on to Deſtruction, and I will acquit thee at the laſt Judgment, when I ſhall plead the Cauſe with my Accuſers, Mockers and Crucifiers. Make haſte that thou may be deliver'd from the Wrath to come; and take care to repair the ruines of thy Soul, while it is in the pangs of Death, before thy Wound become incurable. I invite thee, while there is yet time to have pity on thee. Run ſwiftly to the Throne of my Grace, that thou mayſt feel the pleaſure of my readineſs to pardon, and after that live among my beloved Friends in the midſt of *Jeruſalem*, my Spouſe.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXXII.

### *Of the Consideration of the Scourging of Christ.*

THou hast very grievously, and in many ways sinned, my Son, and I have endur'd severe Sufferings for thee. I liv'd so unblameably among Men, that thô I had many cruel Enemies and Slanderers, yet no Man could convince me of Sin: Nevertheless, I have been treated as an unworthy Malefactor, and most cruelly Scourg'd. That Innocent Flesh which was fram'd of the purest Blood of my sweetest Mother, was tore with the Lashes of those, who hated me without a cause, and sought to destroy my precious Life without mercy. I wish, my Son, when thou hast a mind to sin, that thou would consider the most Innocent Son of God, ty'd to a Pillar, modest and silent, who with infinite Mildness endur'd the Lashes

Laſhes of thoſe that ſcourg'd him, which were multiply'd as the Sand upon the Sea-ſhore. I wiſh the Sins of the Sons of *Adam* were weigh'd in a ballance, with the Pain and Miſery that I ſuffer'd guiltleſs, being expos'd naked to the Fury of my Enemies, that it might appear how much the latter outweigh'd the former. O how juſtly wilt thou be Condemn'd, if thou doſt not turn to me with thy whole Heart! Thou wilt have ſo many Witneſſes accuſing thy Conſcience, as I receiv'd Laſhes with the Whips that afflicted my Soul. Wherefore, while it is yet Day, repent my Son, and do not continue to multiply thy Sins, till they be more in number than the Hairs of thy Head. Do not ſtrive againſt thy Redeemer, bound and ſcourg'd for thee; for ſuch Cruelty is unworthy of a Chriſtian Man, which I have freely made thee. Look upon thy Pattern that thou may'ſt learn Repentance, and be mov'd to Com-

paſſionate

paſſionate my great Miſery. Think what thy own Conſcience would have ſaid to thee, if thou hadſt been preſent in the place where I was Scourged. Certainly it would have ſtung thee with moſt bitter remorſe, when thou beheld my Fleſh rent and torn, and my Blood running down, until my Tormenters being wearied, but not ſatisfy'd, gave over. Now altho my Paſſion be paſt and gone, yet it is expedient for thee, my Son, to think upon it, as if it were preſent; that it may make a deep and laſting impreſſion upon thy Heart, and move thee to ceaſe from Sin which thou ſtill commits. The cruel Miniſters of the unjuſt Judge, who fear'd and honour'd *Ceſar* more than God, exercis'd their fury like mad Dogs, whom hunger provok'd to be ravenous. The Lamb of God did not move them to pity, who was dumb before his Shearers, and opened not his mouth. They ſpared not the Son of God when he hum-

humbled himself before them, tho' the wild Beasts are wont to spare those that lye prostrate in their sight; but after they were wearied, they left me horribly disguis'd and torn in pieces. What means this? How long will the Sinner run on with a stiff neck against the patience of the Only-begotten Son of God? Why does not the Stones cry out, and every Creature most earnestly demand Vengeance for this Ingratitude, whereby the heart of a Sinner is hardened. Consider, my Son, this matter which is of greater moment than all things in this World, that thou may repent, and be turn'd unto me, before the number of thy days be compleated, which I permit thee to live upon this Earth. 'Tis certain that my Saints, who have seriously meditated upon the bitterness of my Passion, altho' their heart did not accuse them of grievous Sins, yet calling to mind the cruelty of my scourging, have soberly chastis'd

their

their Bodies; whereas thou who haſt committed Sins more in number then the Stars in Heaven, does not only neglect to chaſtiſe thy Body, and bring it into ſubjection, but cheriſhes and pampers it contrary to my Law, and loves thy own Fleſh more than me. Return therefore and commune with thy own heart, and ſee what thou art a-doing: Be attentive, and conſider the Works of thy moſt mild Redeemer, who was made the Reproach of all Men, and the Scorn of the meaneſt of the People. Break off the bands of thy Sins and come to me being tied to the Pillar, not that thou may'ſt be bound and ſuffer Puniſhment, but that thou may'ſt be Abſolv'd, and enjoy endleſs Comfort, which thou wilt find in thy much-deſir'd Converſion.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXXIII.

### *Of the Consideration of crowning Christ with Thorns.*

THY Heart, my Son, does daily grow more cold and hard, because thou dost not remember my Disgrace, and Torments: Thou shunnest all occasions of suffering any thing for thy Sins, and pursues with all thy Heart the vain desires of Honour and Profit, that thou may be an Enemy to my Cross. But I did not so, when I wrought out thy Salvation upon Earth; nay I sought out occasions of suffering injuries and Pains for thy sake, which you will easily perceive, if you will consider the sad Spectacle of my Coronation. For such a Crown which tormented and dishonour'd me, was never heard of in the History of earthly Kings, but was invented by my cruel Enemies, and worn

worn by my Infinite Meekneſs. If thou kneweſt, my Son, what horrible Pain I endur'd when thoſe Thorns pierc'd my Head, which was fram'd by the Finger of God, and deſign'd to keep his Secrets, thou would not be ſo cruel, as not to melt into Compaſſion. But if thou joyns with the ſharpneſs of my Pain, the ſcoffs and taunts of a King crown'd in mockery, thou may'ſt very well think that I deſcended into the loweſt abyſs of Pain and Diſgrace, for this was a very deep Pit. I wiſh, my Son, thou would ſometimes conſider my cauſe which was order'd for thy Converſion and eternal Salvation: What cauſe I pray you, had theſe Robbers to mock me, when I was encompaſs'd with the pains of Death? Were the Works that I did ſo mean, that they muſt inſult over me, as a ridiculous King of the *Jews*? Why did the vileſt Sinners ſo cruelly deſpiſe the Son of God, who a little before

before had wrought many Mirac
to the aſtoniſhment of the Mult
tudes? Certainly, my Son, if tho
rightly conſiders theſe things, tho
wilt find my Pains and Scoffs
no wiſe ſuitable to my wonderfu
Works, but to thy grievous Sins an
Abominations: I was puniſh'd
for thee, and my Soul was made
ſorrowful even unto Death with the
bitterneſs of my Paſſion, that
might deliver thy Soul from Death
Why doſt thou not remember me
But for the ineſtimable mercy o
thy Redemption, thou repays m
with injuries and tranſgreſſions o
my Law, by which, thou do
again and again crown me wit
Thorns, and tear my precious Head
Why art thou ſo blind, that tho
doſt not ſee how manifeſtly tho
incurs Damnation, while thou do
thoſe things againſt him who hat
ſuffer'd ſuch things for thee? Whe
wilt thou begin to behold the Ligh
of my moſt powerful Truth, an
wal

walk no longer in darkneſs, with thoſe who love Vanity and ſeek after Lies. Thou haſt mock'd me long enough, thou haſt inſulted me long enough, my Son, change now thy mind, and turn to me, that the ſtain of thy Ingratitude may be waſhed out, and that thou may'ſt be cleanſed from the Leproſy of thy Corruption. Commune with thine own Heart and ſay, *The Son of the moſt high God was treated as if he had been an infamous Sinner, he was tortur'd with a horrible Crown, and mock'd by Men unworthy to live, for me his moſt unworthy Creature: How then can I, without incurring manifeſt Damnation, offend him, and provoke him to anger? Do not I believe him to be infinite in Majeſty, Greatneſs and Dominion? Yes certainly I believe him to be the Lord of all things, at whoſe Word the Pillars of Heaven tremble: How then did he humble himſelf to ſuffer ſo much miſery and diſgrace from Men?*

*Men?* Think of these things, my Son, and take care to think of them so, that thy Soul being taken in the Adultery of Sin may melt into godly Sorrow, and that thou may'st be wash'd in the Bath of thy Tears, from the pollution of thy Sins wherewith thou art defil'd. Dissolve now the bonds of thy Iniquity wherewith thou art tied, depart from false Prophets who seduce thee, seek after Judgment and Justice, and by a timely Repentance save thy beloved Soul. Fight the good fight which Faith proposes, and run after me that you may lay hold of Eternal Life, and in stead of a Crown of Thorns which was fix'd upon my head, I will crown you with a most precious Diadem in my Holy City.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXXIV.

### *Of the Conſideration of ſhowing Chriſt to the People.*

MY Mercy, Son, rejoyceth againſt thy Judgment, for the cauſe of thy Damnation is proportionable to my Compaſſions, wherewith I have plentifully redeemed thee. But if thou would make an eſtimate of the greatneſs of my Mercy, weigh the greatneſs and multitude of my Sufferings, whereby I purchas'd to my ſelf a peculiar People, when I might without ſuch horrible Torments have redeem'd them. Certainly the Spectacle which *Pilate* propos'd to the furious People, when he ſaid, *Behold the Man!* is ſufficient to teach thee what I ſuffer'd; For if it was ſuch that this Infidel believ'd, he could by ſhowing it ſatisfy my moſt cruel Enemies who demanded my Death,

Death, certainly thou who believeſt who I am, ſhould ſatisfy thy ſelf by ſeeing thy afflicted King, and not multiply thy Sins whereby thou torments him. Such a Spectacle has not been ſeen, nor heard of in any Age, a Spectacle ſo full of pains and mockeries; and yet thou who believes, that the Majeſty of God lay hid under all this diſgrace, art not prick'd at the heart, neither conſidereſt what thy wicked Deeds have done! How long ſhall I bear with thee, O ſtrange Son, who confeſſes God with thy Mouth, but in thy Works denieſt him? How long ſhall I multiply my Inſpirations, and knock at the gates of thy Heart, and thou wilt not open to me who deſires to reſt in the Bed-chamber of thy Soul? Is it poſſible to remember me ſtanding before the People and compar'd with *Barabbas*, and not bewail thy Sins until thy Tears do fail thee? O Son of *Adam*, how hard and inſenſible art thou! The World

World could not entertain a worſe opinion of their Saviour, than by preferring a ſeditious Perſon, a Robber and a Murderer before him. How ſtrangely hath God blinded the Daughter of Sion, his own People, for their manifold Tranſgreſſions againſt him, that they ſhould prefer an abominable Sinner before the Son of the moſt High God? 'Tis ſtrange, that the World ſhould think it expedient for them to remove me from the Earth, and ſuffer a moſt wicked Man to live, for by this it appears, that in the Judgment of the World Sin is preferr'd before my Innocence. But if this be ſuch a wonderful prodigy, conſider attentively, and thou wilt ſee, that thou daily follows this Judgment of the World, ſince thou preferreſt to me the vileſt and baſeſt things for which thou commits Sin; Return therefore to a better mind, leſt perhaps thou be condemn'd with the World. Neither let it ſeem hard to

thee, my Son, to forſake thy Pleaſures and Advantages, which befor thee, that thou may'ſt keep my Commandments, without which thou cannot enter into Life: For it is much better and more profitable for thee, to ſorrow for a little time unto Repentance, having the hope of eternal joys, than to enjoy for this ſhort time a vain mirth with the Children of this World, having no hopes of a future Inheritance, which in my New Teſtament I have left to my deareſt Elect. Begin therefore now, my Son, to be prick'd at the heart, and be encourag'd to ſeek after thy Salvation, as if it were now ſaid unto thee, *Behold the Man!* and look upon me all over wounded from the ſole of my Foot to the crown of my Head, and expos'd to thy Mercy or Wrath; and take notice of the cruel anſwer given by the ungrateful People, who cry'd out, *Crucify him, crucify him.* My Inheritance is become to me as a

Lyon

Lyon in a Wood, and have given their Voice againſt me. Tell me therefore, my Son, what thou would have thought if thou had heard the Voice which pierced my Heart, at the hearing whereof the Heavens and the Earth were aſtoniſh'd. Certainly thô thou wert a Sinner, yet believing my Innocence, even thou would have admir'd the barbarity of my City. If therefore I being innocent in thy judgment am demanded to ſuffer Death, and thou knoweſt that I die for thee, how dares thou ſin, and thereby give occaſion to my Death and Crucifixion? Wo to that hard Heart which is not mov'd to pity, while the Cauſe of the Death of the Son of God is handled; he ſhall not find mercy when I come again to judge the Earth. Accept therefore, my Son, of my Counſel, and truſt in God thy Redeemer and Preſerver, and blot out thy Sins by a hearty Contrition. Wipe off thy filth, forſake

the cuſtoms of Old *Adam*, which thou learn'd when thou follow'd the law of thy Members, that warreth againſt the pure Spirit of God; and with a purified Heart, adhere ſtoutly to the chaſte and ſpotleſs Law of my Spirit, and I will reward with moſt ſweet Conſolation the ſhort exerciſe of thy mortal Life.

## CHAP. XXXV.

### *Of the Conſideration of Chriſt bearing his Croſs.*

THou haſt bought for thee, my Deareſt Son, five Yoke of Oxen, which ſo bow down thy back towards the Earth, that thou canſt not look up to Heaven where my treaſures are, and I out of pity to thee, have choſen ſo to Redeem thee, that I ſhould bear thy burdens. For this end, after the ungrateful Citizens of *Jeruſalem* with fierce Eyes had demanded my Death, and Pi-

*late*

*late* had consented to their Fury, a very heavy Cross was laid upon my Shoulders, that I might *bear all thy Sins in my Body upon the Tree*. Consider therefore what a sad sight it was, to see the Son of the most High God go forth bearing the Cross, which is enough to move a heart of Iron. O how justly might thou weep with the Daughters of *Jerusalem*, following my Foot-steps, when I went forth, that I might be offer'd a Sacrifice for thee, as if I were unworthy to dwell in my beloved City. The stripes had wasted my Flesh, and my Blood of infinite Price had water'd the barren Ground, which brought forth Briars and Thorns: And now my strength begun to fail, for the greatness of my Pain and Grief; and yet this heavy burden was laid upon me to satiate the Cruelty of my Enemies, who insulted my infinite Mildness. Thou art hard-hearted, my Son, thus perversly to resist my Mercies; and

yet if thou would, as becomes thee, meditate upon the Journey of the Son of God, aſcending into the Mount to die for thee, thy Bowels would be ſo mov'd within thee, that thou wouldſt at laſt ceaſe from Sin and follow me. Great would thy Happineſs be, if the deſires of the Fleſh, which thou indulges, were chang'd into the deſire of bearing with me the Life-giving Tree of the Croſs, into the Mount of Viſion, where the wonderful Prodigies of God appear'd. Bleſſed are they who bear my Yoke, and are made partakers of my Paſſion, for they ſhall be made Partakers of my Reſurrection. Bleſſed are they who do not abhor, but love the way to that Mountain, where the Son of God was reckon'd with Sinners, for from that Diſgrace they ſhall be advanc'd to Glory. Let not, my Son, the Spectacle of thy Saviour bearing the Tree diſcourage thee, do not faint in thy mind when thou con-

conſiders his Legs trembling under the burden, and his Life waſted with Grief; for this is the way of the Tree of Life, which the wiſe and prudent Merchants of the World could never find, but only my few Elect, who deſpis'd the Laws of the *Medes* and *Perſians*, and the Magnificence of the King of *Babylon*, that they might obtain the trueſt comforts and Riches in the Land of the Living. Theſe are they who pray in Secret, who attend and lament me with many wiſhes and ſighs, and think they hear the noiſe and clamour of the Soldiers, making haſte to put me to Death. But thou, my Son, follows their counſel, who left me and fled, and which is worſe, thou flees not only for fear, but out of hatred of my Paſſion, and of that Death which giveth Life unto the World, and without which all Men would die eternally. Wherefore I exhort thee to return into the way from which thou haſt

gone aſtray, like a Sheep that is miſerably loſt, leſt perhaps thou fall into the Jaws of that Wolf, which always lies in wait for my Flock. Repent now, my Son, of thy Error, and take me for thy Guide of the way that leadeth to Life; and ariſe from the ſleep in which thou now lies, for thou haſt a great way to go. Behold the mild Son of God, compaſs'd about with Dogs, that ſeek to lick up his Blood, and aſcending to the place of the Evening-Sacrifice, wherewith his moſt High Father was appeas'd! Shun the diſſenſions of Men who differ from the righteous Will of God, and a[illegible]d to the Viſion of Peace; into the place where the bow of the Covenant appear'd, which God has ſet in the Clouds between Heaven and Earth. Why then doſt thou delay, my Son? Why art thou afraid to aſcend, when thou haſt me for a Companion of thy Journey, and thy moſt faithful helper, if perhaps thy

ſtrength

ſtrength ſhould fail thee? Let us then aſcend together, and die together in the Holy Mountain, upon which my moſt merciful Father caſts an Eye of tender Love. Let us Sacrifice fat Burnt-Offerings full of hearty Love, that Death may loſe its bitterneſs and ſting. Meditate on theſe things, my Son, and be thou faithful, that thou may'ſt be made Partaker of my Redemption, and be deliver'd from the hard bondage of Sin wherewith thou art oppreſs'd, and aſpire after the Privileges of the Sons of God, whoſe names ſhall live for ever. Break off the Bands of thy Sins, which will not ſuffer thee to aſcend with me into Mount-*Calvary*, that thou may'ſt enjoy the ſweeteſt Fruits of my Blood which I ſhed for thy Salvation. The time is too ſhort, and many days are paſt and gone, without reaping any benefit of it, nay thou haſt ſuffer'd great loſs, How long delayeſt thou to turn to my moſt precious Friendſhip!

ſhip! Run therefore ſwiftly, and by the ſincere Repentance of a contrite Heart repair the loſs of the Years that are paſt, that it may be well with thee at the Laſt Day. If thou haſt followed me bearing the burden of thy Sins, I will receive thee into the number of my faithful Friends, who continued with me in my Temptations, to whom it is given to feaſt with me, after the toils of this life, in my heavenly Kingdom.

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## CHAP. XXXVI.

*Of the Conſideration of Chriſt's Crucifixion.*

AFter my Cruel Enemies, being deſirous to root me out of the Land of the Living, came to the Mountain where the Lamb of God was to be ſacrific'd for their Salvation, and faſten'd him to the Tree,

Tree, it cannot be expreſs'd how cruelly they Tormented me, if perhaps their Fury againſt me did at any time ceaſe. Thou muſt purify thy Eyes, my Son, that thou may'ſt conſider what was done in that Mountain: I was carry'd as a Lamb for a Victim, *and as a Sheep before the Shearers is dumb, I open'd not my Mouth*; but meekly deliver'd myſelf up into the Hands of my Tormenters, that they might lay my Body in that Bed which thy Sins had prepar'd for me; Not to take any ſleep, for that fled from my Eyes, becauſe of the diſtreſs of my Mother, but to endure moſt bitter Pains, which pierc'd thrô my Soul. They did not ſpare me when I lay proſtrate on the Ground, but with violent Hands tortur'd my Fleſh and Bones, that ſo by a terrible Puniſhment they might fit my Body for the Croſs prepar'd for me, that Body which the Holy Spirit had form'd to work out thy Redemption. Then the Diſ-

Diſgrace and Pains of Death, like the Waves of the raging Sea, overwhelm'd me, whilſt the Fierce Executioners, without any ſenſe of pity, faſten'd my Hands with the Nails, which a little before had wrought Miracles, and my Feet which had walk'd thrô the way of Redemption, and with terrible Eyes they ſtar'd upon me. Horror and the fear of Death pierc'd thrô my Marrow; and innumerable Torments, ſuch as no Man ever endur'd, were felt in my Nerves and Bones. Yet I did not draw back, but gave my Body to the Smiters, and laid me down in that Bed which Sinners had prepar'd for me, that ſo thou being plentifully Redeem'd, might permit me to reſt in the Bed-chamber of thy Heart. But from hence it appears that thou art harder than the Stones, becauſe thô thou knoweſt this Truth, which is now made manifeſt to all the World, thou art no more mov'd to Repentance, than if all

all theſe things were Lyes, which my Evangeliſts have written by the Direction of the Holy Spirit. What's the meaning of this, O Prodigal Son, who art gone into a far Country, and art far remov'd from my Peace and Friendſhip! How canſt thou reſiſt the force of my Truth? How can thou, who believes the Myſtery of the Croſs, on which the Son of God was hang'd, run ſo ſwiftly in the broad way that leadeth to Deſtruction? Open the Eyes of thy Heart and ſee, how the Son of God is lifted up from the Earth, that with the ſtrong Chains of Love and Gratitude *he may draw all Men to himſelf.* Behold that Body which was lifted up on high for thee, at the ſight whereof even the inſenſible Creatures were diſturb'd, and ſee that thou be not harder than the Rocks, which were rent in pieces, as if it were on purpoſe to rebuke thy inſenſible Heart. Relent now, O ſinful Son of *Adam*, while the

Foun-

Fountains of the great Deep are broken up, and my Blood runs down like a mighty Stream. Remember what then happen'd, while the World was aſtoniſh'd, and was not able to bear the Death of their Creator, that thou may'ſt be mov'd to a ſenſe of Contrition, and to waſh away thy Sins in the great abundance of the moſt precious Blood of the Son of God. *The Sun was darkned, the Graves were opened, and the Veil of the Temple was rent in twain* at that ſight; thou only, my Son, ſeems unwilling to be mov'd, and to conſider how the Juſt dy'd for the Unjuſt. Be no longer therefore ſingular for the hardneſs of thy Heart, and give over this Folly, whereby thou appears to be worſe than many Infidels, who were ſenſible of the Power of God at my Death, ſo that one of them was forc'd to ſay, *Truly this was a righteous Man*: But thou who believes me not only to be Juſt, but the Juſtifier

ſtifier of Men, and that I Dy'd for the Unjuſt, ought much more to be mov'd to deteſt thy Injuſtice, whereby thou Crucifies me afreſh, and to render to me the Tribute of Praiſe, which is due to the Innocency of the Son of God. And indeed, tho all the other Myſteries of my Paſſion ſhould not ſoften thy ſtony Heart, yet at leaſt, this laſt Prodigy of thy Saviour hanging between two Thieves, and hearing moſt bitter Scoffs, while he was in the Pangs of Death, ſhould convert thee unto me, and change thee from a grievous Sinner into a chaſte and holy Man, that thou may'ſt make ſome ſuitable returns for my Infinite Love. For this is ſuch a thing as the World never ſaw, nor heard of, and it is an abominable Sin, not to be affected with a Chriſtian ſenſe of it. For who ever heard of ſuch things as the Son of God ſuffer'd for thee? Who, beſides me, was ever Crucify'd after ſuch a horrible manner,

ner, and compaſs'd about with ſo many Enemies, that inſulted over him when he was Dying, ſhaking their Heads at him, that they might imbitter his Soul with Gall? Doſt thou not perceive, my Son, theſe Prodigies, in the Mount of my whole Burnt-offering? Where I found no Mercy from Men, and my Father alſo ſmote me for the Wickedneſs of his own People? Conſider that I had not the help of Men, and wanted all Comfort; and all this I ſuffer'd that thou might obtain great Mercy, by blotting out thine Iniquities, and throwing them into the depth of the Sea; and turn unto me, whom thou wilt find with open Arms waiting for thy Reconciliation. But if my Torments will not move thy Soul which perverſly reſiſts my Infinite Goodneſs, yet at leaſt thou ſhouldſt be mov'd with thoſe moſt charming words, whereby I pray'd for thoſe that Crucify'd me, that they might make good uſe

of

of that Blood which they ſhed: Let my Meekneſs move thee, which ſubdu'd the World, not with Iron, but with the Wood of my Croſs; and bring to me when I am dying and athirſt, not Wine mingled with Gall, but a Cup of thy Tears that are ſhed thrô the greatneſs of thy Contrition, which ariſes from the Conſideration of thy dying Friend. Make haſte, my Son, and let the Image of my Death be imprinted upon thy Heart; that ſo, by a thorough Converſion, being made conformable to me in my Crucifixion, thou may'ſt hope for the happy participation of my Reſurrection.

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## CHAP. XXXVI.

*Of the Conſideration of Chriſt's Reſurrection.*

THY Sins, my Son, have ſeparated thee from me, who am the Author of Peace, and never for-

forſake my Friends, unleſs they firſt by ill-advice forſake me: And this Separation being once made, thou greatly abhors the participation of my Croſs and Paſſion, becauſe thy Senſes, like Babes that have not the uſe of Reaſon, are carry'd into Captivity, before the Face of him that aſſaults them; and then are detained as Captives in the Fetters of Temptations and worldly Pleaſures, and are afraid of enduring a ſevere Diſcipline. This is the reaſon why thou continueſt in a ſtate of Damnation, and art unwilling to be Converted to a participation of my Sorrows. If therefore it ſeems hard to thee to follow me while I am ſuffering, and waſhing away thy Sins by my Blood, think at leaſt of the ſtate of my Reſurrection and Immortality, which eaſes all thy Labours, and ſtrengthens thy Soul to run in the way of Life. It will appear but light and momentany, whatever thou ſhalt ſuffer in the ſhort

Courſe

Courſe of this preſent Life, if it be compar'd with an Eternal Weight of Glory. Conſider me the Firſt-begotten from the Dead, riſing again Triumphantly from Death and Hell, and view that Body which a little before had endur'd moſt bitter Pains, glorify'd and adorn'd with the ſweeteſt Beauty and pureſt Brightneſs, in compariſon of which all the Bodily Beauty of Men is in ſome meaſure abominable Deformity. If it ſhould be once granted thee to have a tranſient view of the Splendor and ſweet Comelineſs of my Body, which was formerly Crucify'd for thee, thou would be moſt effectually drawn unto me, at leaſt for the immenſe Conſolation thou would receive by the ſight of me: For ſo great is the Beauty and Lovelineſs of any Body that ariſes after my likeneſs, that it is an unvaluable Comfort and Delight once to behold it. Seeing therefore the ſtate of my Reſurrection, ſo full of

Come-

Comelineſs, and ineffable Sweetneſs, is common to all that imitate me, it is very fit, my Son, that thou ſhouldſt at leaſt ſo far mind thy own Intereſt, as to ſerve me, and turn to me with thy whole Heart, who can glorify thy corruptible Body, thou lov'ſt ſo much, and delight it with immenſe and innumerable Pleaſures. Conſider this wonderful Change, which is more deſirable than all the Treaſures upon Earth, and looking upon the future Recompence, break off the Bands of thy Sins wherewith thou art ty'd, and labour with thoſe that *ſow in Tears, that they may reap in Joy*: For the firm Hope of riſing with me, to be admitted into thoſe Fields that are eternally freſh and flouriſhing, where Divine Conſolations are enjoy'd, is much more precious than all the Pleaſures of the World, thô they ſhould laſt for innumerable Years. The *New Jeruſalem* from above, which abounds with Divine Pleaſures,

fures, and is ſupported by her Beloved, is more Lovely than all the Honours and Dominions of the whole World, which Human Ambition aſpites to. Tell me, O thou Son of *Adam*, wilt thou extinguiſh the Light of thy Faith, whereby I have enlighten'd thy Soul? Doſt thou not believe the Houſe of the Lord is very large, and *in my Father's Houſe are many Manſions?* Yes verily, thou believes that the leaſt Goods not only of the Soul, but even of a glorify'd Body, are greater than all the Kingdoms and Empires of Men, with all their Honours, Riches and Pleaſures. Why then doſt thou live ſo like an Infidel, as if thou deſpair'd of ever entring into my unvaluable Reſt? Were it not more wholeſom Counſel to throw away the Idols of thy Sins which thou adoreſt, and with thy whole Heart turn to me, thy God, Redeemer and Helper, and to fight againſt the Kings of the *Amorites*,

*rites*, that thou may'ſt aſcend out of the Land of *Egypt*, to the excellent Land of my Promiſe, flowing with Milk and Honey? Conſider, my Son, what thou doſt, for it is a grievous Error in thee to chooſe the ſhort Pleaſures of this World, and to prefer a poor ſhort Life before my Life, which is Eternal. Open the Eyes of thy Heart, which thou haſt ſhut, that thou may'ſt not behold my moſt beautiful Light, which delights chaſte Souls; and remember the Land of the Living, whoſe Fields are fill'd with Plenty. Certainly ſo much Beauty is not ſo contemptible, but it very well deſerves thou ſhouldſt fight for it. Conſider with thyſelf, what thou wilt think if thou faithfully ſerve me thy Rewarder, when having overcome Death, thou ſhalt riſe again in that very Body, which now troubles and afflicts thy Soul, and thou ſhalt receive ſuch a Reward *as Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither*

*hath*

*hath it entred into the Heart of Man to conceive:* When being made conformable to me thy King, thou ſhalt ſhine as the Sun, and be adorn'd with the moſt lovely Graces of the famous Sons of *Sion*, and wear a Crown of pure Gold upon thy Head. Why then doſt thou delay to return unto me? What art thou afraid of, my Son? Turn away thine Eyes that thou may'ſt not behold the Vanities of this tranſitory World, and lift them up to the Regions of Immortality, that by the hopes of the vaſt Pleaſures in my Paradiſe, thou may'ſt be mov'd to ſeek my Peace and Friendſhip: Run ſwiftly, that thou may aſcend, and in due time gather the moſt pleaſant Fruits of it.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXXVIII.

*Jesus Christ the Peaceful King of the* New Jerusalem *above, wisheth Salvation to sinful Man.*

This Epistle is nothing else but an Exhortation to Repentance.

1. MY dearest Son, for whom I came to live upon the Earth, as in a strange Country, which I had given to the Sons of Men, who had forsaken me, when I consider thy Folly in turning away from me, I have a great desire to bring thee back from the way of the *Assyrians* where thou drinks troubled Waters, into the way of my sweet *Jerusalem*, that thou may'st drink of the pure Water of *Jordan*, and receive from me some heavenly Refreshment amidst the scorching heats of this World; and therefore I send to thee my manifold Inspirations, which

which I write upon the Table of thy Heart with the Finger of my Spirit. For thou knoweſt very well, thy *Conſcience bearing thee witneſs*, how often I knock at the door of thy Houſe, and enlighten thee when thou wanders in darkneſs and the ſhadow of Death, that ſo being mov'd by the greatneſs of my Goodneſs and Mercy, thou may'ſt awake out of the deep ſleep of Sin in which thou lieſt, and by true Repentance be Converted to me, and reſtor'd to my moſt precious Friendſhip. I have not ceas'd for many Days to admoniſh thee and by my ſecret Inſtructions to teach thee, that thou ſhouldſt conſider the horrible danger in which thou lives, being ſhortly to paſs out of this Life into Eternal Flames, unleſs thou break the bands of Sin from off thy Neck, and returns to the Liberty of the Sons of God, whoſe Names are writ-en in the Book of Life. The time is ſhort, and I ſhall come quickly to call thee to an account, that thou may'ſt either receive a Reward if

thou haſt ſincerely repented, or be deliver'd up to the Tormenters, if thou haſt reſiſted my moſt wholeſom Advices. I counſel thee therefore, my Son, to do good while thou haſt time, and with abundance of Tears to waſh out the ſtains of thy Soul, that thou may'ſt appear white, *Like a Flock of Sheep even ſhorn, which are come up from the waſhing, whereof every one beareth Twins, and none is barren among them*, Cant. 4. 2.

2. That the Bleſſings of my Father may deſcend upon thee, as upon the Head of *Joſeph*, and that thou may'ſt be water'd with the Dew of Heaven, and have for thy portion the Fatneſs of the Land of Promiſe; Conſider, my dear Son, who I am from whom thou haſt departed, that thou may'ſt know the greatneſs of thy Sin, and abhor it as the Gall of Dragons. I am that Infinite Majeſty, to whom all the Creatures do bow their Knees, and at the ſight of whom the Seraphims cover their Faces: From whence

you may eſtimate the greatneſs of your Offence, which is proportionably increas'd by being committed againſt me. For if an Offence againſt the Princes of the Earth be accounted ſo great, becauſe they are Princes, what eſteem muſt thou have of my moſt High Majeſty! Certainly, thô thou art blind becauſe thou haſt rejected my heavenly Light, yet thou can'ſt not deny but thou haſt committed a great Evil, in forſaking me; chiefly, becauſe thou haſt ſinn'd for want of due conſideration of my Infinite Greatneſs, and art thereby become an abominable and uſeleſs Man, and one that *drinketh in Iniquity like Water*. Wherefore, when thou reflects upon thy Error, my Son, thou ſhouldſt proſtrate thy ſelf before the Throne of my Grace, and with the deepeſt ſighs ſeek after my Meek Face, that thou may'ſt be deliver'd from the powerful Wrath of that King, who is exalted above all the Kings of the whole Earth.

3. And indeed the Consideration of the Divine Majesty, whom thou hast offended, my dearest Son, ought to dissolve thy icy Heart into tears of Sorrow for thy Sins, whereby thou hast provok'd me, althô I have oblig'd thee by my many Favours; for it is an intolerable indecency to displease my Infinite Goodness and Wisdom, althô I should bestow no good thing upon my Creatures. But when my Benefits, wherewith I have oblig'd thee, are so great and so many, thy Baseness, my Son, is encreas'd to a vast degree, while thou resists my many Mercies. The most cruel wild Beasts, are tam'd by Kindnesses, as you may see by the example of Bears and Lions, who like House-Dogs follow after their Masters; but thou art so hardned against me, that thou despisest all my wonderful Benefits. I without thy Merits justify'd thee, and sign'd thee with the sign of my Christian Warfare: I preserv'd thee from innumerable Evils both of Sin and Punishment

ment, into which thou wouldſt have fallen, but that my merciful Providence protected thee. I deliver'd thee from Eternal Flames, in which thou hadſt been now burning, and could not ſo much as expect a drop of cold Water to cool thy Tongue, but that my Heart was mov'd to Compaſſion by the endleſs Miſery of my deareſt Son. I fed thee with the pleaſant Food of my Body in the Sacrament of the Euchariſt, and have given thee the Living-Fountain of my Blood to drink, that thou might be near of Blood to me. What then could I have done more to thee, my Son, than I have done? What could the moſt loving Mother have done to her Only-begotten Infant, which I have not done more abundantly to thee, whom I have lov'd, thô thou haſt hated me? But if paſt Favours ſeem ſmall to thee, I will add yet greater, that thou, if thou wilt, may'ſt yet be reconciled to me by new Inſtances of my Love, and I will lead thee with my

faithful Servants, thrô the ways of Righteouſneſs to the fruitful Paſtures of my Divinity.

4. O Son of *Adam*, if thou knoweſt what I have prepared for my Elect, for whom I have made a new and eternal Teſtament, how greatly would thou be griev'd for thy Loſs, and how diligently would thou ſeek to repair the Ruin conſequent upon thy Sins! O *Iſrael*, how great is the Houſe of the Lord, how vaſt are the Dominions he poſſeſſes! All the Kingdoms of the World, all the Riches and Treaſures of Princes, and all the Delights of the Sons of Men, are but extreme Miſery, if compar'd with the everlaſting Reſt of one of God's Elect. Seeing therefore, my deareſt Son, thou by tranſgreſſing my Law, art only to poſſeſs a ſmall Portion of the Goods of this tranſitory World, Why doſt thou not conſider, what a Madneſs it is for ſuch a Trifle to loſe the hopes of Eternal Joy? Would it not be better and more to thy advantage

to rejoyce in hopes of a future Kingdom, and to uſe ſparingly the Goods of this World; than madly to deprive thy ſelf of Eternal Light and Joy, for the Comforts of this preſent World, which thou ſcarce lives to taſte of. This was certainly the reaſon which induc'd the Holy Men in ancient times to ſequeſter themſelves from the World, and retire into the Deſarts. This is the lively and efficacious Doctrine of my moſt powerful Truth, which if thou wert not harder than a Stone, would prevail with thee to repent with deep Sighs and overflowing Tears. Do not therefore, my Son, any longer ſerve Sin, which hath ſhut up the Gate of Life againſt thee, but incline thy Heart to keep the Commands of my undefiled Law, having reſpect to that unvaluable Reward, more to be deſir'd than Gold, which I have propos'd unto thee.

5. But if an Infinite Reward of the ſweeteſt Pleaſures, and the running ſtreams of that River which

make glad the City of God, do not move thy hard Heart, consider at least, my deareſt Son, the greatneſs and horribleneſs of the Puniſhment thou muſt endure; and thô thy Heart were harder than Iron, thou canſt not but fear thoſe Eternal Flames, to which that Body of thine is liable, which thou loves more than thy Soul. For how wilt thou be able to endure, my Son, the Torments of Hell-fire, and that Worm which ſhall eternally corrode thy Bowels, if thou can'ſt not now endure Faſting for one Day, or an inconvenient Bed for one Night? Art thou ſo blind that thou cannot ſee thy fooliſh Choice, to fatten this Body for a few Days that it may be burnt for ever? If nothing elſe then will prevail with thee, yet at leaſt let the terror of thoſe Torments perſuade thee to turn unto me, and to ſave thy Soul by a ſpeedy and true Repentance, that thou may never deſcend into the Bottomleſs-pit, where thou wilt be uncapable of the

the benefit of my Redemption; for I am unwilling to exerciſe the Sword of Juſtice againſt thee, my deareſt Son.

6. But if future Evils, which are not yet ſeen, do little affect thee, who art too much in love with the apparent good things which are ſeen, conſider thy preſent loſs and damage which thou incurs by Sinning, and learn to ſeek and love me. Doſt thou not perceive while thou ſinneſt, that thou makeſt me thy Enemy, and that thy Conſcience is reſtleſs and troubleſome, becauſe thou haſt loſt that peace and ſerenity of Mind which cometh from God, to which the bondage of Sin ſucceeds, and a horrible deformedneſs of Soul. A little before thou wert my moſt lovely and ſweet Spouſe, whoſe Comelineſs and charming Beauty won my Heart; but in that very Hour in which thou committed Sin, thou becam'ſt abominable and horribly deform'd, above all that's ugly in the World.

It

It is ſtrange therefore, my Son, that thou doſt not wiſely reflect upon this change, the due conſideration whereof, would make thee ſhun Sin, as thou doſt Death and Hell.

7. But if this change doth not move thy hard Heart, my dear Son, yet conſider the contrary change, from a ſtate of Sin to a ſtate of Grace and of my Friendſhip, and let thy own pleaſure at leaſt allure thee. For if thou rightly conſiders, thy Soul, as long as it Sins and is not converted unto me, is the very Picture of the Devil whom it imitates, and by horrible filthineſs grows black. But if thou would concur with my Grace, by the ſorrow of Contrition, it would be renew'd and made whiter than Snow; and then it will become moſt beautiful, and lovely far above all Corporeal Beauty, which will be very pleaſant and acceptable to my moſt tender Heart. And it ſhall be cloth'd with Purple and fine Linnen, and be admitted with ineffable Joy into

to the Bed-chamber of the peaceful King.

8. But if this Renovation, as it is pleaſant to me, does not move thy Soul; yet at leaſt let the inward comfort which proceeds from true Repentance, together with the hope of Eternal Life powerfully affect thee. For this hope being well-grounded, will cheer thee, my Son, with that inward Senſe of raviſhing Joy, which the proſpect of Eternal Life produces. And even in this Mortal Life, thou ſhalt taſte and ſee how ſweet I am, by feeling thoſe inward joys, which proceed from newneſs of Life. Believe, my Son, thoſe that have try'd and found, that my preſent Conſolation is more precious than all the joys of the World, what-ever the Children of this World ſay, who have caſt off the diſcipline of the Son of God. Neither do thou hearken to the counſel of thoſe Men who abhor Repentance, as contrary to the pleaſures of this Life; for they know

know not what they ſay, and they judge of that which they do not underſtand: But rather, hearken to me, my Son, and ſee, and incline the Ears of thy Heart to my Inſtructions; and I will inſtil into thee, the ſweet words of Salvation which I do earneſtly deſire.

9. Let it not ſeem hard to thee, ſince thou art a Sinner, to endure the ſorrow of Repentance, that thou may'ſt obtain Salvation and Eternal Life, ſince I have endur'd a very ſevere Penance for thee, who am Innocence itſelf, and the brightneſs of Eternal Light. Nay for this very reaſon, becauſe I am the Pattern ſhown to thee in the mount of the Church my Spouſe, thou ſhould account it a moſt pleaſant Society, to labour with me, and take my ſweet Yoke upon thee. Let us work together, my deareſt Friend, and let us live together in the ſtricteſt bond of my Spirit. I will help and comfort thee, as my dearly beloved Son, and will leſſen the labour

bour of thy Repentance, by aſſiſting thee with my ſtrength, which I will ſecretly afford thee leſt thou faint in the way. And certainly thou wilt be more happy in my aſſiſtance, althô thou ſitteſt in Sackcloth and Aſhes, than if thou ſhouldſt poſſeſs the Empire of the whole World without my Society.

10. Be not diſcourag'd, my Son, with the harſhneſs of Repentance, as it is repreſented by ſome, which thy Senſes being accuſtomed to worldly Pleaſures abhor. I will ſecretly refreſh and ſupport thy Heart, ſo that thy Puniſhment ſhall be pleaſant to thee, which thou endures for waſhing away the filth of thy Sins; and thou ſhalt ſee how great and ineffable is the Conſolation that attends true Repentance, and how vilely the Children of this World are miſtaken, who would bring up an evil report upon it, and reproach my Infinite Goodneſs and Mercy, as if I were cruel toward Sinners that are converted to me. Remember

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the Prodigal Son, who after innumerable Sins return'd to my Houſe, and ask him, Whether he was evill-entreated, whether I ſpoke one harſh Word to him, when his Heart relented, and he begun to ſigh for his Folly. If thou haſt read the ſweet and winning Diſcourſes in my Goſpel, thou wilt find, that I Convers'd upon Earth with Publicans and Sinners in ſuch a familiar and merciful way, that for this I was rebuk'd by the wiſe and prudent Men of the World; from whence thou may'ſt judge, how falſe it is, that I am too ſevere towards thoſe, who are not Publicans and Sinners, but begin to follow me.

11. Wherefore, my Son, I Exhort thee not to be diſcourag'd, and do not believe the Difficulties in the way of Life to be inſupportable, into which thou cannot return without Repentance; but believe thy faithful Maſter and Redeemer. Break off the bands of thy Sins wherewith thou art oppreſs'd, and ſeek for eaſe and refreſhment. Begin to make good uſe of the healing Virtue of the Sacrament, which is as the Conduit-Pipe by which my moſt precious Blood is convey'd. Abandon your Carnal Friends, and ſeek only my moſt pleaſant Friendſhip: Shut the Door of thy Houſe,

thy Houſe, and with many Sighs pray unto my Father, that he would reform thee, and make thee like to his Only-begotten Son. *Seek and ye ſhall find, knock and it ſhall be open'd unto you*, pray in Faith and you ſhall receive. For my Mercy is not of ſhort continuance like yours, which is like the Morning-cloud that quickly paſſes away, or the early Dew that is quickly dried up by the riſing Sun. I am an inexhauſtible Fountain of Mercy, and am Glorified by ſhewing pity. It was never heard at any time, that I deſire the miſery of the needy, and the ſighing of the poor, who ſought after my incomparable Riches.

12. Know therefore for a certain, my Son, that if thou turn to me, thou ſhalt find in me every thing that is good and comfortable. I will be to thee a Father and a Mother, a Brother and a Siſter, and a moſt faithful Friend, ready to inſtruct and help, comfort and defend thee. Wherefore you ſhould conſtantly endeavour to walk in the way of Life, and never fear the oppoſition that will be made by thy Enemies, for I will be with thee: I have overcome the World, and thou ſhalt be made partaker of my Victory, provided thou wilt abide

bide with me, and never depart out of my ſight. Break off therefore thy bands, my deareſt Son, and offer to me the Sacrifice of Praiſe, which I will gladly accept at the time of thy much-long'd for Reconciliation. Give me the Right-hand of Friendſhip, which I may juſtly demand, becauſe I firſt lov'd thee. Do no longer follow after thy Senſual Appetites, but from a deep ſenſe of Contrition and Love, ſeek out a place where I may lye and reſt my ſelf at Noon; and prepare for me a Bed-chamber in the Center of thy Heart, where thou ſhalt feel the Meridian Heat of my Love. Turn to me, my deareſt Son, and I will turn to thee, that I may deliver thee from thy hard Bondage, and exalt thee to the happy ſtate of the Sons of God, among whom thou ſhalt enjoy my moſt Beautiful Light.

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*FINIS.*